

EARLY RUSSIA —the USSR

**Historical
Sketches**









**T. Golubeva
and L. Gellerstein**

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INTRODUCTION

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR) is a very large country. When the gold hands of the clock on the Kremlin's Spasskaya (Saviour's) Tower show noon, it is night in Chukotka and Kamchatka in the Far East.

Though people of many different nationalities live in the USSR, they are one united friendly family.

In the USSR all power belongs to the working people. It is the working people who make the laws and who govern the state. All the factories, railways, power stations, mines, fields, forests, rivers and seas belong to them. There is no exploitation of man by man. Everybody enjoys equal rights and everybody works for the good of all.

But it wasn't always like that. Before, the country was ruled by the tsar, the landowners and the capitalists who made life very hard for the working people.

The working people fought for many years to win freedom. In 1917, under the leadership of the Communist Party, which Lenin had founded, the workers and peasants overthrew the tsar. They drove away the landowners and capitalists and took power into their own hands. Then they began to build a new life.

To understand what life is like in the USSR today and to imagine its future, one must know something of its past. This book will tell you about the history of Russia which became the world's first Soviet socialist state governed by the workers and peasants.

Finding Out How People Lived Long Ago

People long ago did not at all live like they do today. There were no such things as big cities, factories, railways or airplanes. The houses in which people lived, the clothes they wore, their customs were all very different.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS. The past does not vanish without trace. The ruins of ancient buildings and of graves remain. In them clothing, utensils, weapons and other things are found. To learn how people lived long ago these things have to be dug up and studied. It is for this purpose that archaeological excavations are carried on.

Such excavations are conducted in the Caucasus, the Crimea, Siberia and Soviet Central Asia, in the ancient cities of Kiev, Novgorod and Moscow, in short, everywhere people used to live.

In Central Asia, in hot waterless deserts, archaeologists discovered the traces of dried-up canals and the ruins of buildings, which have been covered up by the sand. This is what is left of an ancient city. Digging was started. Using machines and then spades and picks archaeologists carefully cleared away the sand from the ruins of huge walls, tall towers and dried-up canal beds. In places where machines and spades were found too big smaller tools like knives, pincers and brushes were used.

The royal palace was especially interesting. It was built nearly two thousand years ago. This large, two-storey building did not have a single window. Daylight came in through openings in the ceiling. On the top

floor archaeologists discovered wall paintings depicting people, animals, and hunting and battle scenes. They also found bronze swords and daggers and earrings and bracelets of turquoise and silver. Beautiful patterns of white and red lines were painted on the dark blue walls. Only skilful artists and masons could have built such a beautiful palace.

On the first floor there had once been a pottery. Here long ago craftsmen had worked by the light of torches and oil lamps.

Since then many years have passed. Now people have come here again. They used bright electric lanterns to see this big building better. Clay vessels that had been made to store grain lay around the floor. Some were ornamented with various patterns. Everywhere there were bits of pottery and lumps of petrified clay as well as unfinished jars that still showed the fingerprints of the craftsmen who had made them.

In this way we found out that once there had been a beautiful city in this desert. We were also able to find out what the people who lived here looked like and what sort of things they did.

The excavations in Central Asia showed that more than two thousand years ago great states had existed where the two Soviet republics of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are now located.

In those far-off times strong states had also existed in the Transcaucasia. Excavations in Armenia and Georgia have helped us to learn much about them.

These states in the Transcaucasia and Central Asia are the oldest to have been found in what is now the USSR.

ANCIENT ALPHABETS. Of course the ruins of buildings, weapons, jewelry and other objects can tell us much about how people used to live in ancient times. But we learn most about the past from what people wrote. People learned to write a very long time ago.

In Armenia, for instance, one could find stone tablets with inscriptions that were carved on them more than two thousand five hundred years ago. Carved on the orders of the kings who ruled then, these inscriptions describe various military campaigns and conquests, the capture of prisoners and other booty, as well as the building of canals and cities.

During excavations in Central Asia wooden tablets and bits of leather with writing on them were discovered. Scholars are still unable to read many of them.

In Novgorod archaeologists found birch-bark scrolls. They are dark from age and the letters scratched on them with pointed sticks known as styluses can hardly be seen. Taking great care to prevent these scrolls from falling

apart, scientists brushed away the dust and treated the scrolls with a special liquid. These scrolls proved to be letters, receipts, student notes, and the like.

Most of the ancient books that have come down to us are written on parchment made of the specially treated skins of calves or lambs. One such manuscript was discovered in the library of an old monastery. This splendid poem was written about eight hundred years ago and is called **The Lay of Igor's Campaign**. In it the ancient poet describes a campaign that Russian soldiers fought against the warlike nomads of the steppes.

The Lay of Igor's Campaign is a story in verse about the Russian people's heroic past and their deep patriotism.

Much about the past history of the Soviet peoples can be learned from folk songs, epic poems, and proverbs. For centuries they were handed down from father to son by word of mouth, and have come down to us. Scholars take great pains to collect and study ancient objects and manuscripts as well as folklore and legends.

THE PAST

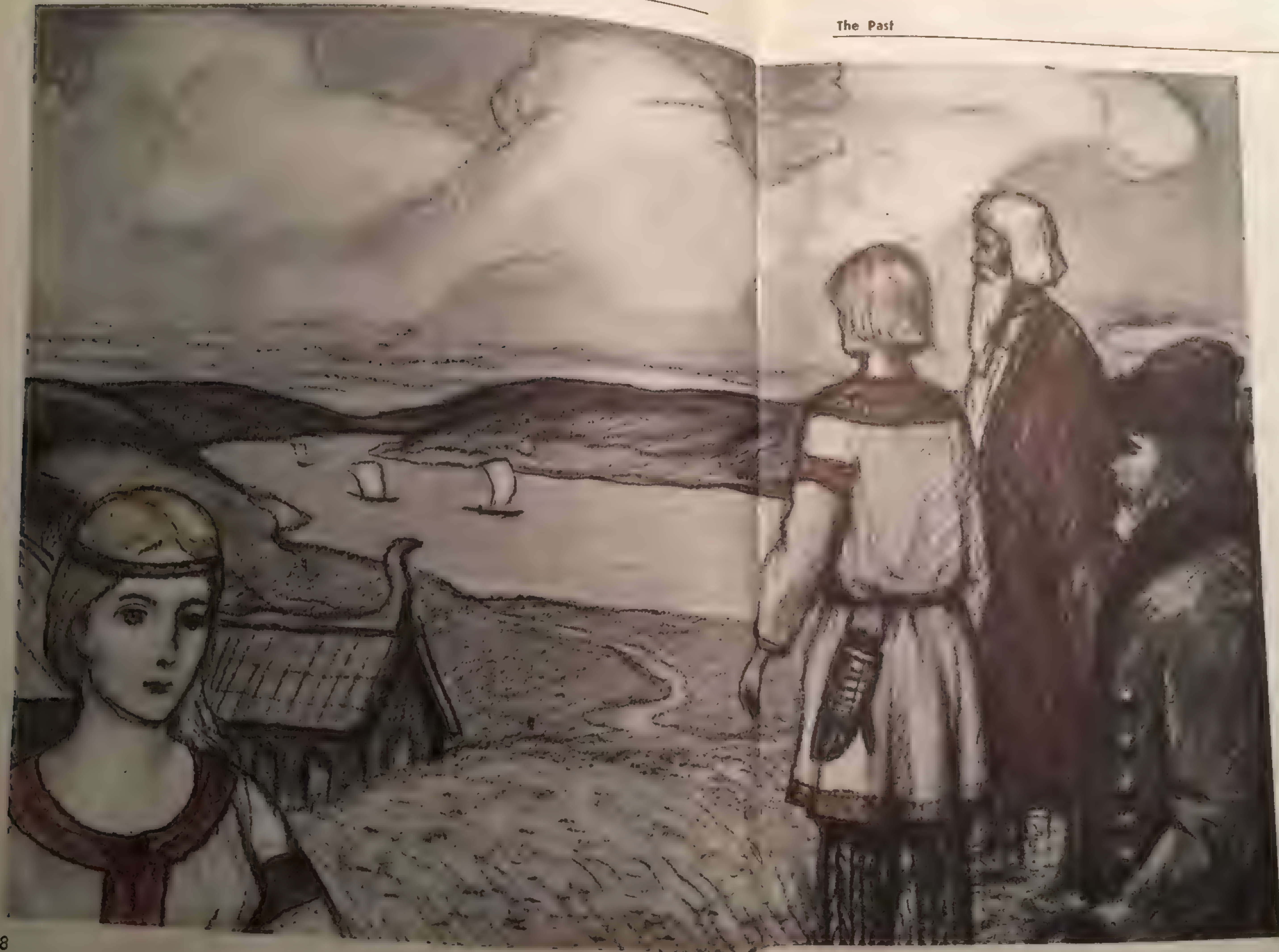
1. THE ANCIENT SLAVS

A Slav Village

Long long ago there dwelled in Eastern Europe the Eastern Slavs, the ancestors of the Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian peoples. Excavations of Slav villages as well as ancient manuscripts and folklore have helped us to learn much about their life and occupations. To imagine their way of life, let us go back some fifteen hundred years to visit a Slav village.

We find ourselves in the depths of a thick forest. The smell of pine resin, honey and bird-cherry trees fills the air. In a clearing on a steep river bank is a small village. On the other side is a gully. Outside the village is a field. It was no easy matter to work this field. At first all the villagers worked many months to chop down a large patch of forest. This was not an easy task as tall trees had to be felled, thick bushes cleared away, and tree stumps uprooted by means of crude axes and sickles. Then everything that had been chopped down was burned in big bonfires. With hoes and spades the villagers loosened the earth and mixed it with the ashes. When the time for sowing came, an old man walked into the field and scattered the grain on the loosened earth that had been covered with a thick layer of ashes. Behind him came several younger men who pulled a rope tied around the trunk of a fir-tree, which had been stripped of its bark, but still had many strong, pointed branches. This was used to harrow the field and cover the seeds with good earth.

The villagers themselves are slim, fair-haired people. The men wear white linen blouses, tied around the



Eastern Slavs.





Eastern Slavs.

waist with coloured sashes, over linen trousers. The clothes worn by the women are gayer and their dresses are decorated with pretty bright-coloured embroidery. Among the villagers is a grey-bearded man with a face showing strong character. He is the village elder. He not only gives orders but also works alongside the others.

The ancient Slavs were not only

farmers. The dense forests were full of birds and animals—bears, wolves, foxes, squirrels, hares, black-cocks, and grouse. Try and imagine a group of hunters slowly coming up the path. They are carrying a rich trophy, a bear that they have killed. The villagers will now have meat, while the bear skin will make warm winter clothing. Towards evening the shep-

The Past

herd returns with cows and flock. The fishermen are with their catch.

The houses in the village have been built on stilts and roofed with straw. The tiny windows are right down by the ground so that no light



herd returns with his small herd of cows and flock of sheep and goats. The fishermen also have come back with their catch.

The houses in which the villagers live have been put together with logs and roofed with planks of wood or straw. The tiny windows, which are right down by the ground, hardly let in any light at all. The floor inside

is of earth. In one corner a hearth has been built of stones. The smoke from the fire escapes through the doorway, as there is no chimney. Along the walls stand wooden benches. Shelves hold clay and wooden utensils.

Dusk will have fallen, when the villagers, tired out after their long day of work, will sit down to eat. Their food is plain and it is almost the same for everyone. There are no poor and rich villagers. They work together and the land and cattle belong to them all.

Their life is hard. They have to work a great deal and often have to fight. That is why they build their villages in places that can be easily defended and why they have fortified them.

Armed with spears and long swords the men of the village gather to choose a leader. "The nomads have attacked our neighbours," the elder says. "They dashed down on their swift horses, burned the fields and houses and took captive nearly all the villagers. But they have not gone far. They may return any moment. Instead of waiting we had better go and fight them."

The village men choose the elder's son as their leader. He picks a group of the bravest and best armed.

The old blacksmith and his son have much work now. Only these two know how to make strong axes, swords, spears, arrow-heads and sickles. The villagers respect the blacksmith and slightly fear him as nobody else knows how he makes these things.

This was how the Eastern Slavs, forefathers of the Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians of today, lived long ago.



Ancient Kiev.

The Rise of Kiev Rus

As the centuries passed the life of the Slavs changed. They became better farmers and began to use ploughs. They had better yields. Some of the villages grew into towns, which had sturdy walls and deep ditches around them.

The biggest towns of the Eastern Slavs were Kiev and Novgorod. Writing developed, though at the beginning only a few knew how to read and write.

As farming and livestock breeding developed, private property gradually appeared. Now people were no longer equal. Each family had its own farm. Some grew rich, others became poor. Now there were the nobility—princes and boyars. The rich seized more and more land and were able to make the poorer peasants and craftsmen work for them. In the 9th century the first big state of the Eastern Slavs—Kiev Rus—was founded. The capital of this state was the city of Kiev.

2.

ANCIENT KIEV

The city of Kiev lies on the steep right bank of the broad Dnieper River which flows into the Black Sea. The golden domes of its churches glitter in the sunshine. Its fortress walls rise up menacingly. By the wharves and jetties lie ships that have come to Kiev from different countries. They have brought beautiful vases from Greece, amber necklaces from the Baltic countries, jewelry of gold and silver, colourful silks, foreign wines, and dried fruit. An unpaved street leads to the marketplace, where in different languages

merchants and craftsmen praise their wares.

When twilight comes the city becomes quiet. Chains clank as the drawbridge over the moat is slowly lifted. The city gates are shut tight. Anyone who fails to return in time will have to spend the night in the open. These gates have to be shut as there is always the threat of a sudden attack by an enemy. No wonder the city is surrounded by a deep moat, a tall earthen rampart and sturdy log walls and towers. The soldiers guarding the city wear coats of mail and steel helmets and are armed with swords and spears.

The outer walls and gates were not only fortifications. They also added to the beauty of the city. In ancient Kiev its most attractive gates were known as the Golden Gates. Part of these gates is still standing today. Clever craftsmen built posts of pink brick and white stone. The gates themselves were faced with sheets of gilded copper that were ornamented with fine carving. They glistened in the sun as if they were made of pure gold.

Cathedral of St. Sophia

More than nine hundred years ago, in the reign of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, a big cathedral was built on a broad open space near the Golden Gates. Its builders, using the simplest tools, put up a building which still amazes everyone with its splendour. Artists decorated the walls and domes of this cathedral, which was called St. Sophia, with mosaics of 250 different colours and tints. These decorations went up as high as 36 metres and have kept their beauty to this day.



A monk chronicler.

Everyone entering this cathedral saw side aisles lost in darkness and beneath the huge dome a brightly lit central part of the cathedral. The priests were clothed in rich garments and there were magnificent gold and silver chalices and chandeliers. The grandeur of the cathedral was meant to make people believe in God and his absolute power over everyone.

The clergy, the priests and the monks helped the rich and the nobility to keep the people under their thumb. They said the God had divided people into rich and poor, into the high and the low. Anyone who protested was against God, they said, and God would cruelly punish him for his disobedience. The churches

and the monasteries themselves were extremely rich.

The churches had their own schools in which they taught reading, writing and arithmetic. There were monks who kept a record of the most important events of each year. They were the most educated people of the time. These manuscripts describe the military campaigns of the Kiev princes, battles against the nomads, artisan and peasant uprisings against the nobility and other such important events.

High Born and Low Born

The prince with his boyars and warriors are feasting in his palace. They sit on broad benches covered

with costly rugs. Oak tables groan under all manner of good things to eat. They are set out with gold and silver plate. Here and there stand pitchers of mead, cordials and costly wines from overseas. Wax candles in silver candlesticks burn brightly. Costly weapons adorn the walls. The feast is at its height. The master and his guests call for music and song. Servants lead in a blind old man wearing a long embroidered white smock. He sits down by the prince's feet and places his psaltery¹ on his knee. Plucking its strings with his fingers he begins to sing of the glorious deeds of the great heroes who so bravely defended the land of Russia from her enemies.

The princes and the boyars lived in great comfort. The wealth of princes, boyars, merchants and clergy was created by the hard work and skill of the peasants and artisans, who worked from early morning till late at night. Famous far beyond Kiev were the swords with their carved handles, the coats of mail and helmets that were made in Kiev. Goldsmiths made chalices, rings and bracelets of precious metal, while cobblers and tailors made red soft high boots of goat skin and attractive kaptans and hats.

More than once Kiev's working people rose up against their masters. They killed the prince's servants and set fire to the homes of the boyars. In some big uprisings the poor seized the riches of the princes, boyars and merchants and divided them up among themselves. There was one such an uprising in 1113. The townsfolk were joined by the peasants of

the neighbouring villages. Afraid that this uprising might spread to other parts of Russia, the boyars and clergy asked the prince of another city for help. The uprising was put down.

This was how people lived and fought in ancient Kiev, the "mother of Russian cities" and capital of the powerful early-Russian state known as Kiev Rus.

3. THE TARTAR CONQUEST

The old Russian state grew bigger and stronger. More land was cleared of trees and put under plough. Rich and handsome cities were built. Some became capitals of separate principalities. The principalities of Vladimir, Smolensk and Ryazan grew powerful. Local princes, the rulers of these principalities, did not want to obey the Prince of Kiev. They also quarrelled among themselves and often captured cities and villages from one another. As a result Kiev Rus was divided into a number of independent principalities.

The Mongol-Tartars

In the 13th century the Mongol-Tartar hordes, nomad horsemen from the steppelands of Central Asia, fell upon Russia. The Mongol-Tartars had no cities or villages. Their leaders owned huge herds of horses, camels and sheep and big grazing grounds. These herds were looked after by the poorer nomads. The Mongol-Tartars lived in a kind of tent known as a yurt. It was made of poles that were covered with felt. The Mongol-Tartar nomads took their yurts with them on carts when they went off to look for new pastures.

¹ Psaltery — a musical instrument in ancient times, with strings over a soundboard.



The Tartars storm a Russian city.

Because of this roaming, nomad life, the Mongol-Tartars, men and women alike, were fine horsemen and archers. Even small children from the age of three or four could ride and use bow and arrow. In fact, each Mongol was equipped to fight and had his own battle axe and bow and arrows. The richer nomads were armed with spear, scimitar and shield and wore a protective coating of leather. The horses, too, had similar leather "armour." Mongol-Tartar spears had special hooks to drag enemy horsemen out of their saddles. They used wooden siege-towers, catapults, battering rams and also fire bombs, which were clay vessels con-

taining naphtha, as well as arrows wrapped in naphtha-soaked rags.

When fording rivers Mongol-Tartar warriors placed all their weapons in leather bags which they tied to the tails of their horses. They themselves swam across, holding on to the horses' manes.

The Mongol-Tartar force was led by a khan and high-born generals, whom the warriors had to obey implicitly. Discipline was very harsh. If ten warriors fled from the battlefield, a hundred warriors would be executed. And if one of ten warriors was taken captive, then all the others would be executed.

The Mongol-Tartar khans fought many campaigns of conquest. Rich and flourishing states in Central Asia and the Transcaucasia were destroyed by them.

Invasion of Russia

The Tartar Khan, Batu, overran Russia in 1237. The Prince of Ryazan, the first city to be attacked, asked the other Russian princes for help. But no help came. The princes fought amongst themselves, and each one hoped that the Tartars would leave him alone.

The Mongol-Tartar hordes advanced like an avalanche. In the frosty air

the sweating horses gave off clouds of vapour. The first detachment galloped up to the walls of Ryazan with savage cries. Here the Mongol-Tartars halted before the slippery ice-covered earthen ramparts and high log walls and towers with narrow slits. The Mongol-Tartar chieftain called on the people of Ryazan to surrender. But they said: "Only when all of us are dead will the city be yours." The enemy stormed the city. They were held off with buckets of boiling tar, and arrows and rocks. The Mongol-Tartars continued to attack day and night. However, the people of Ryazan stubbornly defended their city.

Baskaki (khan's tax collectors) taking in the tribute.



Wives and daughters took the place of the men who fell. However, more and more Mongol-Tartar troops attacked. The ranks of the defenders dwindled. Then came the last assault. The Mongol-Tartars attacked from every side. They set fire to the log walls and broke into the city. Crowding into the streets, they killed old and young and looted homes. By night only a pile of flaming ruins was left.

Khan Batu and his hordes thrust further into Russia, leaving ashes and ruins behind them.

For four long years Russia fought the invaders. Chronicles describe how the people of the small town of Kozyelsk fought to the last man against the vast Mongol-Tartar hordes. They stopped a huge Mongol-Tartar army from advancing for two whole months. No wonder the Mongol-Tartars called Kozyelsk a "wicked town."

In 1240, Batu laid siege to Kiev. As the chronicler writes: "One could not hear oneself speak for the rasping of cartwheels and the screeching of camels and the cries and shouts of all the people." After a long siege Kiev was taken by storm, its last defenders fell beneath the ruins of the stone church where they fought to the end.

After devastating Russia, Khan Batu looked towards Europe. However, the long and bloody war he had fought against Russia had weakened his strength. Time and again Russians in various parts of the land rebelled against the Mongol-Tartar conquerors.

Afraid to leave behind Russia, torn and devastated by battles but refusing to admit defeat, the Tartar khans

turned back. Thanks to the Russian people's heroic fight Europe was saved from this terrible invasion.

Mongol-Tartar Rule

In the steppes along the Volga and the Don rivers the Mongol-Tartars formed a state which they called the Golden Horde. This state also included Russian land. For a long time the Russians had to pay heavy taxes to the khan's greedy and cruel tax-collectors every year. This was a terrible hardship. Often they took everything away. Many became beggars after paying their taxes. All who could not pay were cruelly beaten in the market places. Thousands were made slaves. Only the clergy did not have to pay taxes. But the people did not submit. Their struggle against their oppressors grew stronger.

4.

DEFEAT OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

Ancient Novgorod

Of the few Russian cities to survive the Mongol-Tartar invasion, the largest was Novgorod, or Novgorod the Great as it used to be called.

The principality of Novgorod stretched from the Gulf of Finland to the White Sea and the Urals Mountains. Trade made the city famous and wealthy. Caravans of Russian and also German, Danish, Swedish and Arab ships sailed up the Volkhov River bringing bolts of fine cloth and silk, crates of metal plate and glassware and casks of costly wines. The merchants of Novgorod took fur, honey, beeswax and linen to countries overseas.

This principality was governed not by a prince as in other Russian domains, but by a *veche*, an assembly of people. All the adult men of the city attended the *veche*. However, the rich boyars and merchants, who were elected by the *veche* to be the city's rulers decided everything. To defend Novgorod from its enemies the *veche* would invite a prince and his *druzhina* (a bodyguard made up of the Prince's close followers) from other parts of Russia. Whenever war broke out would an armed guard formed from townspeople fight together with hired soldiers.

As the *veche* bell tolls, the wooden pavements echo to the sound of rush-

ing feet. Artisans, merchants and boyars gather to talk about the alarming news. The Teutonic knights are attacking Russia from the West. They want to capture the rich lands of Novgorod. They have seized the Baltic states, cruelly suppressing the resistance of the people—the ancestors of present-day Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians. Now the knights have invaded the lands of Novgorod the Great.

More than once Russian warriors had helped the Baltic peoples fight off the Teutonic knights. However, now the knights had chosen a good moment to attack. Russia lay in ruins after the Mongol-Tartar invasion. The

Alexander Nevsky.



Teutonic knights hoped that the other Russian principalities, whom the Tartars had destroyed, would be unable to help. No wonder the Novgorodians are so anxious and their veche bell tolls so loudly. "We must defend our land from the enemy. We must call upon Prince Alexander Yaroslavich," they say. "The hour has come to send for Alexander."

The Novgorodians well remembered this young prince's gallant exploits. Indeed, less than two years had passed since at the age of twenty he had defeated the Swedish forces on the Neva River, after which he was known as Prince Alexander Nevsky. Envoys were sent to Alexander and soon he and his druzhina arrived in the city. "We must not let the enemy near Novgorod," he decided. "We must go out to meet them and strike first."

The prince quickly assembled a guard of artisans, peasants and merchants. Troops from Novgorod's neighbours also came to the city's help. Alexander suddenly attacked the invaders, forced them to leave two Russian fortresses and advanced towards the ice-bound Lake Chudskoye, where he had decided to give battle to the main Teutonic army.

The Battle on the Ice

The battle on Lake Chudskoye occurred on April 5, 1242. At dawn Alexander placed his regiments in position. In the distance one could see the formidable army of Teutonic knights. The sun shone on the heavy armour of the riders and their horses. The knights advanced in a wedge-shaped formation. One could distinctly see the five riders in the front

rank, the seven in the second rank, and the nine in the third. In the middle of this wedge, or "pig's snout," as it was called then, were the more lightly armed cavalry and foot warriors. The knights, in their coats of mail, rode their chargers along the flanks and at the back. Thundering and clanking, the flower of Teutonic chivalry moved towards the Russian regiments.

Prince Nevsky knew how the knights usually conducted their battles. They would attack the enemy centre with this powerful wedge, destroy the ranks and thus win victory. Alexander put his best foot soldiers and cavalry on the flanks and at the back. He placed his lightly armed archers up in front in the centre to take the enemy's first charge. Then he concealed his own druzhina behind a cliff in the forest. The battle began.

The enemy struck deeper and deeper into the Russian ranks. Thinking victory was near, they became jubilant. They did not suspect that the largest part of the Russian army had not yet entered the battle.

"For our native land, for Russia!" shouted Alexander.

The Teutonic formation broke up. Suddenly Alexander's hidden warriors struck. The horses in their steel armour stumbled and slipped across the ice. Under the blows of battle axes the riders were knocked out of the saddle. The ice grew red with blood. Melting in the spring sunshine, the ice cracked beneath the heavy weight of the armoured horsemen. Only a few bubbles showed in the dark waters where the knights sank like stones to the bottom. The survivors fled.



Moscow in the 12th century.

"And the Russians cut them down and chased them across the ice a good seven versts," the chronicles say. No wonder this battle has gone down in history as the "Battle on the Ice." Many Russian warriors who fought without thought of their own lives, also fell.

The Russian troops returned to Novgorod victorious, bringing the captured knights lashed to their horses.

After this battle the Teutonic knights never tried again to attack Russia.

5. MEDIEVAL MOSCOW

Moscow, capital of the Soviet Union, is one of the world's largest cities. It was here that Lenin lived and worked. Here the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has its congresses. The Moscow Kremlin is the seat of the Soviet Government. The voice of Moscow reaches out to the farthestmost corners of the earth. Some of the most important documents of our day carry the words "The Kremlin, Moscow."

Moscow has a splendid, eventful history that began many centuries ago.

Though people had lived for ages on the spot where Moscow now stands, it was first mentioned in the chronicles in 1147. This date has come to be accepted as the year the city was founded. Then it was a small town. It stood on a tall bluff with a thick forest all around it, at the place where the Neglinnaya River and the Moskva River met. Then Prince Yuri Dolgoruki ordered earthen ramparts to be made and a sturdy wall of oak with towers to be built. This was Moscow's first Kremlin. It was well protected by the steep banks of the Moskva and Neglinnaya Rivers. Inside the Kremlin were the prince's mansion, the houses of the boyars and several small wooden churches. Outside the wall lived the artisans. The moment they saw the enemy everyone would hide behind the walls of the Kremlin.

However, this fortress was not always able to fight off the enemy. Sometimes the entire city would burn to the ground. Though the Mongol-Tartar khans left Moscow in ruins, the people rebuilt the Kremlin and the city started a new life.

By the late 13th century Moscow had become the centre of an independent principality. This once unknown town began to rival such ancient and powerful towns as Vladimir, Tver and Ryazan.

The rise of Moscow was greatly helped by its advantageous geographical location. In those days it was dangerous to live in open areas near the steppes, where any moment there could be an enemy raid, fire, capture or death. People fled from these

places deep into the country behind the barrier of thick forests. Peasants and artisans were only too glad to make their homes on the banks of the Moskva River where there was lots of spare land and flood meadows provided fine pastures for cattle. The rivers were full of fish and the forests full of game. The land here gave good harvests. The neighbouring principalities to the south protected Moscow from the raids of Mongol-Tartars.

The Moskva River was also a convenient waterway. Along the Oka and the Volga, one could travel to faraway southern lands. Numerous tributaries linked Moscow with other cities. Waterways also led to Novgorod in the northwest. When rivers and streams ended crews had to pull their boats ashore and drag them to another river. In these places such towns grew up as Vyshni Volochok and Volokolamsk.

Ships brought goods to Moscow from all over Russia. They unloaded their cargoes on the quay near the Kremlin. Archaeologists found this place during recent excavations. They dug up more articles used in trade here than anywhere else—large and small weights, iron scales and wooden sticks that were marked to show the amount of goods bought or sold.

Moscow's merchants and artisans certainly had something to sell. There was fur, honey, beeswax, armour, swords and jewelry. At the market place at the foot of the Kremlin walls all sorts of things were sold. No wonder, the Russians would say when they wished someone well: "May you have in your home what Moscow has in its market place." When the merchants were happy, the Prince was

also happy as no merchant could sell anything without first paying the Prince a sum of money known as the "myt" which was a sort of duty. People who entered the principality had to pay the "myt" and it is this word which gave the town of Mytishchi, just outside Moscow, its name.

In the 14th century the Moscow Prince Ivan Kalita ("Kalita" is an old Russian word meaning moneybag), the grandson of Alexander Nevsky and an extremely rich man, became Grand Prince, the head of all the Russian princes. This clever and cunning ruler got the Tartar khan's permission to collect the taxes for him in Russia. The khan's own collectors now no longer came to Russia. Now the prince of Moscow himself took the taxes collected to the horde. Part of the money he kept which made him even more powerful.

Ivan Kalita built a new wooden Kremlin in Moscow. At the same time Moscow's first churches of white stone were built inside the Kremlin. During the frequent attacks the stone walls of these churches gave good protection against the arrows and stones of the enemy. Often the boyars and the merchants hid their riches in the church cellars.

6. THE BATTLE OF KULIKOVO

The people rose up to fight the Mongol-Tartar invaders. The uprisings that broke out in various parts of Russia were cruelly put down by the Mongol-Tartar khans. In order to get rid of the khans the Russian principalities had to unite. Moscow became the centre of this struggle.

By the reign of Ivan Kalita's grandson, Prince Dmitri, Moscow had al-

ready many Russian principalities under its rule. To make the defences of the city stronger, the Prince ordered walls of white stone to be built in place of the previous wooden ones. Soon a formidable fortress stood on the Kremlin hill.

To defend the Kremlin clever craftsmen made cannons that fired small stone cannon-balls. These guns were Russia's first firearms.

The Tartar khans were alarmed by Moscow's growing strength. They were afraid they would lose their power over Russia if it united. So in the summer of 1380 Khan Mamai of the Golden Horde led his vast army against Russia.

Dmitri called all who could bear arms to join him. Peasants and artisans joined his troops. Soon they set out from the gates of the Kremlin. On the way they were joined by other Russian princes who recognized Moscow's rule and also by troops from the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

This large Russian army of 150,000 men marched south to meet the enemy. On September 7, they crossed the Don River and took up their positions on the field of Kulikovo. Here they waited for the army of Khan Mamai. Prince Dmitri had good reason to choose this spot. It was surrounded by forests and crossed by gullies and small streams. There was very little room here for the Mongol-Tartars to use their cavalry, which was the most important part of their army. In the forest itself Dmitri placed a picked regiment in ambush with orders to attack the enemy at the decisive moment.

On the morning of September 8, the Russian troops assumed their battle formation under the cover of a thick fog. Trumpets resounded, a forest of



The battle on Kulikovo field.

spears bristled and the unfurled banners proudly waved in the wind. When the fog lifted Prince Dmitri rode up to the front regiment. His generals advised him not to take part in the battle. But he replied: "How can I say 'brothers let us strike together!' and hide my own face. It is my wish to be in front both in word and in deed."

According to the tradition, before the battle began two strongest soldiers, one from each army had to fight a duel in the open space between two armies. The giant Chelubei charged out of the enemy ranks and raised his heavy spear as if it were as light as a feather, challenging the ene-

my. At that moment the Russian hero Peresvet galloped forth on his steed. The two riders threw themselves at one another, their spears striking at one and the same instant. A moment later Chelubei's horse galloped back to the Mongol-Tartar ranks dragging after it its dead rider. Peresvet held on but as his charger reached the Russian lines he died.

Again the trumpets sounded. The warriors raised their crimson shields and the enemies clashed. The cries, the neighing of the horses, the clashing of shield upon shield and the splintering of spears all joined together in

the battle. The Mongol-Tartars crushed through the Russian centre. However, the right flank held its ground. The enemy cavalry turned to attack the Russians' left flank. Under the increasing pressure it began to fall back. The Mongol-Tartars were about to turn to strike at the Russians from the rear, when the picked Russian regiment that Prince Dmitri had stationed in ambush, dealt a rapid surprise blow at the rear of Mamai's horsemen. They quivered and broke, upon which the other Russian regiments hurled themselves against the enemy.

When Mamai saw the Russians crushing his army he cried: "Let us flee and take nothing but our own heads." The enemy fled. For fifty kilometres the Russian army chased the defeated enemy.

Several days after the battle a horseman galloped into the streets of Moscow. He checked his lathered steed by the gates of the Kremlin. Prince Dmitri had sent a messenger with the glad news that Mamai was in full flight.

Soon afterwards the Russian army returned to Moscow. In front, on his

charger, sat Prince Dmitri in shining mail and helmet. Behind came his warriors who had defeated their strong and cruel enemy in that terrible battle. Behind captive Mongol-Tartar chieftains dragged their chained feet. To the jubilant cries of the people the Russian army entered the Kremlin.

In honour of the victory won on the banks of the Don, Prince Dmitri was called Donskoi.

Though the battle of Kulikovo had dealt the Golden Horde a powerful blow, its rule was not yet completely broken. Two years after this battle, the new khan suddenly attacked Moscow and took it by a ruse. He set fire to nearly the entire city. Russia again had to pay tribute to the Tartar khans. However, the blood shed on the field of Kulikovo had not been spilled in vain. The people understood that the hated rule of the Tartar khans could be overthrown. To do this all Russian lands had to be united under Moscow.

The battle of Kulikovo was the first step towards the liberation of the Russian and other peoples from Mongol-Tartar rule.

SERF RUSSIA

7. MOSCOW, CAPITAL OF THE RUSSIAN STATE

End of Hated Rule

A full hundred years had passed since the battle of Kulikovo. Much in Russia had changed in this time. Little by little the Moscow princes gained power over the other parts of Russia. Moscow grew especially powerful in the reign of Dmitri Donskoi's great-grandson Ivan III. Tver, Yaroslavl, Novgorod and other principalities acknowledged the rule of Moscow. In place of feuding principalities there was now a strong Russian state which stretched from the steppelands along the shores of the sea of Azov to the White Sea and from the Dnieper River to the Ural Mountains. Ivan III now called himself not just the Grand Prince of Moscow but "Tsar of All Russian Land." There now lived in the Russian state besides the Russians themselves the Mordvinians, Udmurts, Komi and Karelians. This was a multi-national state.

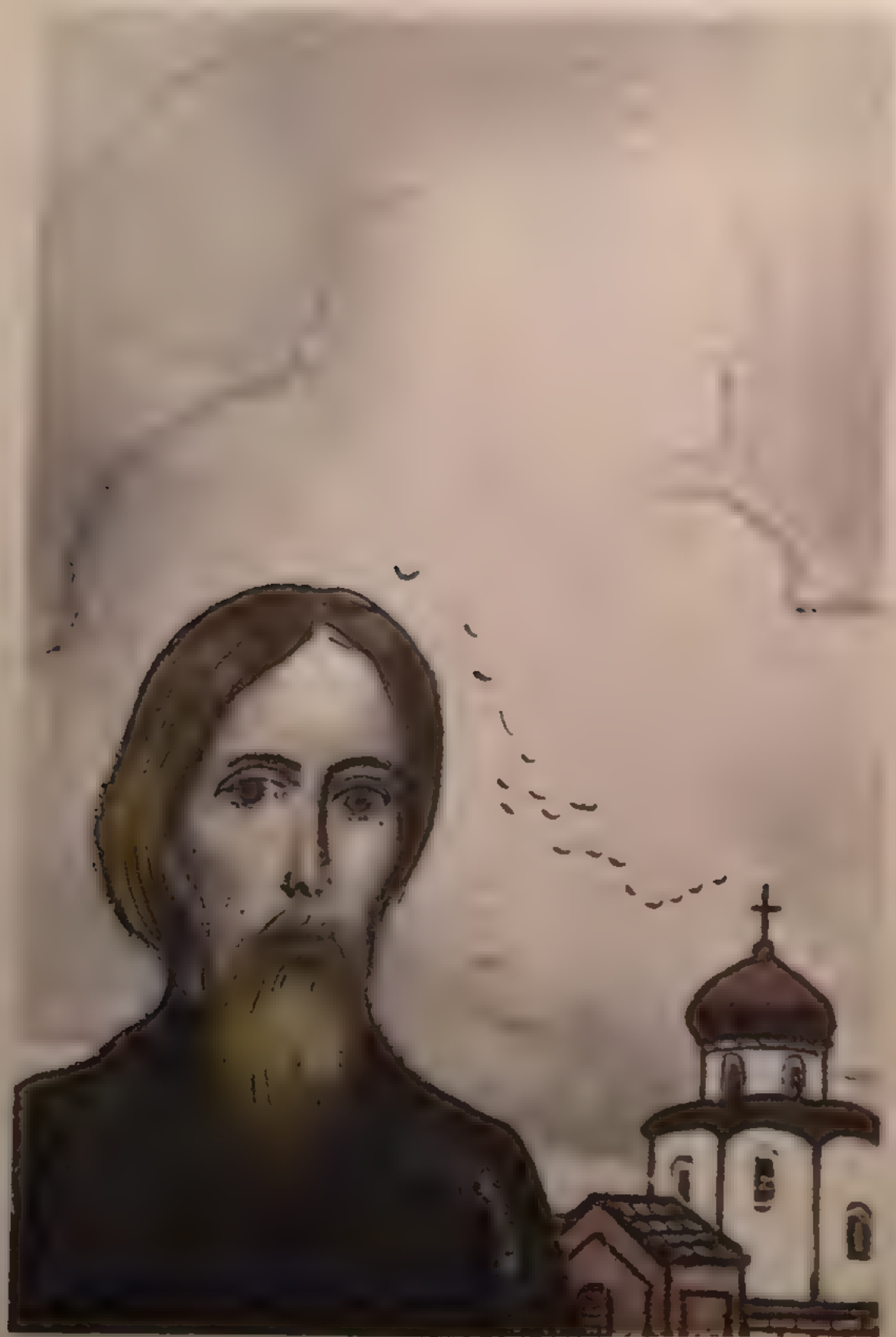
The time had come to overthrow Mongol-Tartar rule. Less and less often did the Moscow Grand Prince send tribute to the Khan of the Horde. Then he stopped paying it at all. The Khan dispatched to Ivan his envoys with his basma—orders to pay the tribute, which the Prince was to humbly accept on his knees. However, Ivan tore the basma out of the ambassador's hands, cast it to the floor and trod on it. Then he told the envoys: "Go and tell the Khan what I have done to his basma. I shall do the same with him unless he leaves us alone." This was an unheard of insult. No Rus-

sian prince had ever dared to treat the khan's envoys in such a way.

To keep his rule over Russia and punish the disobedient Prince the Khan led a large army against Moscow. A Russian army set out to meet him.

The two armies set up camp on op-

posite banks of the Ugra River, 150 kilometres south of Moscow. They stood there for several months facing one another across the river and preparing for the battle. Reinforcements were sent to the Russian army. It became stronger. Winter came. But the



Andrei Rublev, the great icon-painter of ancient Russia.

Khan decided not to fight and led his army away.

Thus in 1480, the Mongol-Tartar rule was overthrown without a battle.

The Moscow Kremlin

Moscow was now the capital of the unified Russian state. Its Kremlin gave it beauty and grandeur. However, the old walls were no longer able to protect it properly. The Kremlin that Dmitri Donskoi had built had stood for more than a hundred years. It had survived enemy attacks, fire, even an earthquake. Its white-stone walls were beginning to crumble. In many places there were dark gaping cracks. Now and again these cracks were hastily filled with red bricks or grey cobblestones, or simply boarded over. One could easily lose one's way in the crooked lanes, streets and blind alleys inside the Kremlin. The mansions of the boyars huddled close together, as each boyar wanted to live as close as possible to the Prince's court. Every piece of land was occupied.

Building began on new red brick walls and towers for the Kremlin soon after the overthrow of the Mongol-Tartars. New stone cathedrals and palaces were also built. From early morning till late at night, one heard the ringing of axes, the screeching of saws and the creaking of carts. Outside, at the foot of the Kremlin wall, a deep moat was dug to connect the Moskva River with the Neglinnaya River. Now the Kremlin was surrounded on all sides by water, which made it an even stronger fortress. Within its walls beautiful cathedrals and palaces were put up amidst the trees and bushes.

The Moscow Kremlin has been standing for almost 500 years now. To this day its walls, towers, palaces and cathedrals adorn the city.

On the orders of Ivan III the area outside the Kremlin wall and moat was kept free of all buildings. Today this is Red Square. It became at once a market place, where merchants and artisans occupied every bit of land. Even the bridge crossing the moat had small booths on it, where hand-written books were sold. Trading was also done on the broad wooden bridge spanning the Moskva River. Ships sailed right up to the bridge and unloaded their cargo directly into the shops and stalls.

When the Moskva River froze in late autumn, trading was done right on the ice. Bearded merchants, clad in gaily coloured kaftans, loudly praised their wares—weapons, clothing or silver plate, for instance. Hay, firewood, bread, fish, fowl and frozen carcasses were sold straight from carts. Sometimes horse races and fistfights were organized on the ice. Then the merchants locked their stalls and all rushed to watch this entertainment. Crowds milled around the stalls from morning till night. Some came to buy, others came on business, still others wished to know what was taking place in the world, as there were no newspapers then. Foreign ambassadors passed this square on their way to the Kremlin and it was there that the prince's edicts were read aloud.

In the 16th century an extremely beautiful building, the Cathedral of St. Basil, was built close to the Kremlin wall. Russians and foreigners all spoke with admiration of this wonderful piece of architecture. To this day St. Basil's adorns Red Square as a fine relic of 16th-century Russian architecture.



8. TRAVELS BEYOND THE THREE SEAS

It was the early spring of 1472. Several horsemen with a cart drove up to a small monastery near Smolensk. The monks looked with astonished eyes at the man lying in the cart. His face was sunburned almost black. He was evidently Russian and was dressed in Russian costume. But he was so very

dark! He lay there moaning quietly. His companions carefully lifted him up and helped him to a bedroom. In the night the sick man grew worse.

"Matvei!" he whispered. "Come here. I shall never see Tver again. There is not far to go, but I feel I shall die before I get there. It is six years since I was last home. However, it is a good thing that I am dying on Russian soil. So listen, Matvei," the sick



Moscow in the 15th century.

man was barely audible. "Here are my notes. Be sure you place them in the proper hands in Moscow."

"I promise, Afanasy. Rest in peace," Matvei said.

Matvei kept his promise. Soon afterwards the manuscript of *Travels Beyond the Three Seas*, the account of the journey to India of the Tver merchant Afanasy Nikitin, was brought to Moscow.

Six years earlier, in 1466, a group of merchants had set off from Tver for the far-away countries of the East. It was led by the merchant Afanasy Nikitin, an educated, inquiring person, who started a diary on the very first day of his journey.

With great difficulty, the merchant ships passed hide-outs of brigands as they travelled down the Volga to the Caspian Sea. However, near As-



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Afanasy Nikitin, the famous Russian traveller.

trakhan some of these ships were boarded and looted by pirates. Afanasy lost nearly all of his fortune. But, nevertheless, he decided to go on to Persia. Travelling by horse, camel and on foot he crossed Persia from north to south and finally reached the Arabian Sea. Then after a very dangerous voyage at sea he arrived in India.

In India he spent more than a year. At first the Indians were suspicious of

this stranger from another country. However, Afanasy was friendly and sincere and soon the Indians began to respect and trust him. They showed their friendship when a local rajah took away Nikitin's horse, his last possession, and put him into a prison. He

►
Ivan Fyodorov, who gave Russia her first printed book.



planned to execute Nikitin but his friends saved him.

Though this brave traveller had seen many countries, he thought his own country was more beautiful than any of the exotic countries beyond the seas. "There is no other land like Russia in this world," he wrote in his diary. He became homesick and decided to travel back home.

After great hardships he reached the Black Sea. Then he boarded a ship and sailed for the Crimea where he met several Russian merchants. However, he had suffered too much during these years and he died before he could get back to his native town of Tver.

Afanasy Nikitin was the first European to see India. The Russian traveller was a good friend of its people. No wonder the peoples of the Soviet Union and of India recall him with such affection. His book is read with interest in India as well as in the USSR.

Carved on the pedestal of a monument standing on the Volga's high bank in Kalinin, as the town of Tver is now called, are the words: "To the brave Russian traveller Afanasy Nikitin."

9.

RUSSIA'S FIRST PRINTED BOOK

In one of Moscow's main streets there stands the statue of a man wearing a long kaftan. In his right hand he holds a sheet of paper; his left hand rests on top of a printing press. This is a monument to Russia's first printer, Ivan Fyodorov.

In 1564 he printed Russia's first book. In the 16th century the first printed books appeared also in Byelorussia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, and Moldavia. Earlier books had been written

and copied by hand. Monks who could write spent all day at their work. Sometimes it took several months to copy just one book. No wonder books were so few and so costly. Ivan Fyodorov understood that printed books would be easier to read and cheaper to buy.

Printing books became the aim of Fyodorov's life. Russia's first printshop was built according to his plans. It consisted of several wooden houses joined by galleries. He also gave much of his time, ability and energy to the making of a printing press and of the type—tiny letters of metal.

At last came the day when Ivan Fyodorov started printing. Sunshine lit up the roomy printshop. Fyodorov picked the type out of a small box, set a line and handed it to his assistant who placed the line in a special frame. Little by little he set the text of a whole page. The frame was placed in a tray and rolled with special ink. Then a sheet of paper was placed on top of the tray holding the frame and a heavy press slowly let down upon it. The boy apprentice quickly took the still damp, newly-printed page and hung it up on a line to dry as if it were a piece of washing. When the sheet had dried, it was again placed beneath the press and a new text was printed on the other side. The evenly spaced lines stood out distinctly on the white sheet of paper. There was not one mistake! Ivan Fyodorov looked at this page of his future book with pride and affection.

He and his printers had to work hard. It took them almost a year to put out several hundred copies of Russia's first printed book.

But soon after printed books made their way around Moscow, and the rest of the country.

10.

SERFS

Village Life

Though it is early morning it is still quite dark inside the peasant's hut. The bull's bladder stretched across the small window hardly lets in any light. Inside stand a simple wooden table and two benches. A burnt-out torch is stuck in the wall above a tub with some water in it. In the flickering light of this torch the peasant and his family had supped the previous night on some thin cabbage soup and a crust of bread. In one corner a wickerwork cradle with a tiny baby in it hangs from the ceiling. The older children sleep on a bunk. As soon as their mother lights the stove, they jump off to get away from the smoke which rises up before it escapes through the door. In huts like this there are no chimneys. Now it is time for the peasant himself to go out into the field. He does this most unwillingly. As he slowly walks along with head bowed, following his horse, he thinks bitter thoughts. "When shall I have time to plough my own land," he wonders. "The master has sternly ordered me to plough and sow his field first." The peasant works on the master's fields till he is ready to drop. But this is not enough. The peasant also has to build fine houses for his master, dig wells and repair bridges—and all for nothing. The accursed corvee (unpaid labour) is a terrible hardship. The peasant has no time to till his own land—if one could call it that! Because if one were to take a bird's-eye view of the fields of the peasants, one would think one was looking at a striped jacket, as all the land is broken up into narrow stripes. Each stripe is the field of one peasant family. Set between these

stripes are unploughed pathways that serve as boundaries. The peasants used to say that though these boundaries were not walls one could not climb over them.

The peasant got very little from his patch of a field. But though he did not earn much, what he did did not belong wholly to him. In autumn, he had to bring to his lord and master taxes in kind—chicken, eggs, fat, flour and homespun cloth. The greedy landowners took most of what the peasant had earned by hard work. He knew that if he did not pay these taxes promptly he would be cruelly beaten.

Why was it that the peasants had no rights at all?

All the land was owned by the tsar, the boyars, the landlords (the smaller gentry who received estates and serfs from the tsar for service at the tsar's court or in the tsar's army), and by the clergy. This meant that even the strip of land that the peasant tilled for himself also belonged to somebody else. For the right to live on this land and farm it, the peasant had to do corvee and pay taxes. He could not leave this land and go elsewhere. He was attached to the land and belonged to the landowner, i. e., he was a serf.

The process of turning peasants into serfs happened gradually. In olden times peasants could leave their lords and masters. Then, in the 15th and 16th centuries, laws were passed at the demand of the landowners which forbade this, except in late autumn after the harvest had been taken in and the peasant had paid all his debts.

In the 17th century, the peasants finally became complete serfs and were attached to the land on which they lived. For the right to use this land the peasant had to do everything the



Stepan Razin, the leader of the peasant uprising in 1670.

owner of the land told him to do. He had no right to move away. If he ran away, he was caught, cruelly punished and returned to his old master.

Fighting the Landowners

The peasants did not want to put up with this. Despite the harsh tsarist laws, they ran away from their masters to areas on the borders of the Russian Empire, which at that time were not owned by anybody. A great many peasants settled down on the banks

of the Don and came to be known as the free Cossacks.

Often the serfs openly rebelled against their oppressors. This happened many times in the 17th century, because the tsar, the boyars, the clergy and the other landowners were so cruel.

A big peasant uprising occurred in 1670. It was led by the Don Cossack, Stepan Razin. This peasant leader was a brave and just man who defended the poor. He called on the people to kill the "blood-sucking" landowners and boyars. His words aroused the people.

Razin was joined by serfs and poor townspeople. Russians, Tartars, Bashkirs, Chuvash and Udmurts fought with him. The uprising spread from the Don to the Volga and elsewhere. Razin's army defeated the tsarist soldiers sent against him and freed the peasants from serfdom. Many cities surrendered without fighting. Thus Astrakhan, a well-fortified city at the mouth of the Volga, was taken without a single shot being fired.

To put down this great uprising the tsar sent a large army with cannons and cavalry. Razin and his peasant troops were defeated in a fierce battle outside Simbirsk, the town that is now called Ulyanovsk. Razin wanted to form a new army and continue the struggle but rich Cossacks betrayed him to the tsar. He was put in chains and brought to Moscow where he was horribly tortured and then executed.

11.

WITH RUSSIANS FOR ALL TIME

The life of the Ukrainian people was even worse than that of the Russian serfs and poor townspeople. The Ukraine had been seized by rich Poles who took complete control of a peasant's life and everything he owned. At any moment the landowner could take away the peasant's land and cattle and drive him and his family out of his home. The artisans and even the rich merchants suffered from endless taxes and oppression. The Polish rulers forbade Ukrainians to teach their children in their own language and destroyed books published in Ukrainian. Polish rule ruined the Ukraine and drove its people to despair. They rose up to free their country.

The uprising was started by the Ukrainian Cossacks. They had built their

camp below the Dnieper rapids and were known as Zaporozhye Cossacks. Zaporozhye in Russian means "beyond" or "below the rapids." They were led by a headman whom they elected. The number of Cossacks grew as more and more Ukrainian serfs who had run away joined them. The rebelling Cossacks chose for their headman an educated and clever military leader whose name was Bogdan Khmelnitsky. Though he was respected in the Ukraine and well known in Poland he had suffered a great deal from the Poles. Once when he was away his house and land were seized by a Polish landlord who had the ten-year old son of Bogdan Khmelnitsky flogged to death.

The peasants, Cossacks and artisans who joined Khmelnitsky fought not only to make the Ukraine independent but also to free themselves from serfdom. The Russians helped their Ukrainian brothers, by sending grain, salt and weapons and also fighting side by side with them.

The Polish king sent a large, well-trained and well-armed troops against Khmelnitsky. The Poles thought they would have a quick and easy victory. They went off to the wars, as if going to a carnival, with gay plumes on their helmets and costly trappings on their horses. However, this great army was smashed by Khmelnitsky after several battles. At the battle of Korsun the Poles were completely defeated and half of their army were taken prisoner.

Khmelnitsky's victories aroused Byelorussia, the Ukraine's neighbour. Serfs and townspeople began to fight to liberate their country too.

However, it must be noted that the Ukrainians and Byelorussians fought against the Polish rulers, not against



The Ukrainian rada (National Assembly) in Pereiaslav votes for the Ukraine's reunification with Russia.

the ordinary people of Poland who sympathized with the rebels. Poland's serfs also rose up against their oppressors. Several uprisings took place in different parts of Poland while Khmelnitsky was fighting in the Ukraine. The leaders of these uprisings were in contact with Khmelnitsky and hoped he would help them. However, Khmelnitsky was not able to get to Poland and these uprisings, like those in Byelorussia, were cruelly suppressed.

The war lasted six years. The Ukraine was weak after so much fighting. It could no longer defend itself against its powerful enemy. Khmelnitsky decided to ask the tsar in Moscow to accept the Ukraine as part of Russia. He wrote to the tsar, "I bow to you, our great tsar. The Polish king is leading his entire force against us. He wants to finish us off. Do not leave us in this hour. Let your great country send a strong force to help us quickly."

Moscow decided to take the Ukraine under Russian rule and to start a war against Poland. To announce this a Russian embassy was sent to the Ukrainian town of Pereyaslav.

On January 8, 1654, the Ukrainian National Assembly, or Rada, as it is known in Ukrainian, gathered in Pereyaslav's main square in front of thousands of people. From a platform covered with scarlet cloth Khmelnitsky spoke to the people. He reminded them of their great trials and hard struggle and said that only their brothers, the Russians, could save the Ukraine. "So let us be one with the Russians forever!" he cried. In response came a loud "Yes" from thousands of voices. So the Ukraine became part of the Russian state.

These fraternal peoples, who had been divided for so many centuries, were now reunited. Now they could fight side by side against foreign enemies and their own oppressors and work together more successfully to build up their own economies and promote their cultural development.

12. RUSSIAN EXPLORERS

The joining of the Ukraine to Russia in the 17th century strengthened the Russian state and extended its boundaries in the South and in the West. At this time bold Russian explorers continued to travel northwards and eastwards, to open up the vast areas of Siberia and the Far East.

In olden times little was known of the far-away lands that lay beyond the Ural mountains. It was said that beyond "the Stone" as the Urals were called then, was a vast area which could not be crossed in two years or more. This land had untold treasures, many fur-

bearing animals and fish, while in the Arctic Ocean there were sea animals that had never been seen before.

People not only talked about the fairy-tale riches of this land but also about its hard climate, eternal ice and bitter cold. They said the journey there was difficult and dangerous. Nobody knew how far eastwards Siberia stretched from the Urals. The first people to travel to this area were trappers, Cossacks and other free people. They discovered deposits of mineral ores and sailed their light, flat-bottomed boats down the great rivers of Siberia towards the endless Arctic Ocean.

In places where they camped for the winter which was usually on the top of some tall river bank, they built small villages—ostrogs. They put up log walls and towers, on which they mounted guns. That is how such now well-known Siberian cities as Tomsk, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nerchinsk and Yakutsk grew up in the 17th century.

Serfs ran away to the free lands in Siberia and settled there. Merchants started coming with cloth, jewelry and various articles of metal which they traded for precious furs. Little by little the local people got to know the Russians from whom they learned how to grow rye, barley, oats and vegetables and also various crafts. In turn, the Russians learned about taiga and hunting from the local people. Then the mining of gold, iron ore and salt was started.

Semyon Dezhnev

In 1648, an expedition of ninety men led by the Cossack Semyon Dezhnev set out from the mouth of the Kolyma River in seven small sailing vessels towards the Arctic Ocean. They went



Cossack Semyon Dezhnev,
one of Russia's explorers.

eastwards, along the coast of eastern Siberia "towards the sun." This is a difficult route even for modern ice-breakers, but these brave men sailed it in light wooden ships.

On their way Dezhnev's expedition ran into a storm. The wind blew ice all around them. Using all their strength, Dezhnev and his men made a narrow passage by pushing the ice aside with their hooks. They could already see water in the distance, when suddenly the ice grew thicker and the passage narrowed until nothing was left of it. However, their ships had been built by clever Russian craftsmen. The flat-bottomed boats were pulled onto the ice, sails were put up and they glided across the ice like sledges. Then they splashed back into the water and sailed on further unharmed. However, a few days later they were again caught in a storm. In the end only three ships reached the "great stone nose," Asia's northeastern tip which is now known as Cape Dezhnev.

From this point Dezhnev steered sharply south and entered the strait that separates Asia from America. Before Dezhnev nobody knew about this strait. These Russian seafarers were the first to discover it and prove that the continent of Asia was separated from North America. In the 18th century this strait was named after Bering, another Russian seafarer who eighty years later sailed through it and described it.

Dezhnev spent more than forty years exploring. He was not only the first to round Asia's eastern tip and discover the strait dividing it from North America but also the first to draw a map of the Anadyr River and its tributaries and to meet the Chukchi, Eskimos and other Northeastern Asian tribes.

Yerofei Khabarov

The exploration of Siberia and the Far East proceeded gradually and along different routes. While Dezhnev was exploring the new lands in the north, a party led by the Cossack Yerofei Khabarov travelled southwards from Yakutsk, going up the Lena River and its tributaries towards the Amur River. Some of the Cossacks marched along the bank, pulling their heavily loaded ships against the current.

Winter came and snow covered the taiga. Khabarov and his men made skis and large sledges on which they loaded their boats and all their property. Then they put their cannons on runners and set off across the high mountains. By next spring they had reached the banks of the Amur.

The lands along the Amur and its tributaries were hardly populated at all. Only now and again did Khabarov discover a village inhabited by a local people called the Daur.

Within several years all this vast land became part of Russia. Russian families began to settle along the Amur. They built towns naming two after Khabarov. The biggest city in the Soviet Far East, Khabarovsk, was called after him, while one of the railway stations near Lake Baikal is called Yerofei Pavlovich, the name and patronymic of this brave Russian explorer.

The entire Arctic coast and the Sea of Okhotsk became part of Russia by the end of the 17th century. Towards the middle of the 19th century the Russian flag was raised on Sakhalin, at the mouth of the Amur, and in the Maritime Province, where, in the Golden Horn Bay, Russian seamen founded the city and port of Vladivostok—



Yerofei Khabarov, another famous Russian discoverer.

which means owner of the East. The naval officer Gennadi Nevelskoy and his assistants did a vast amount of work in exploring and describing the Pacific coast.

Thus for centuries Russians explored and developed Siberia, the Amur River area and the Pacific coast.

13. THE NORTHERN WAR

The snow came down heavily. Guns roared without stopping. Flashes of gunfire lit up the night, the broken carts, retreating soldiers and fallen cannons.

This was the battle of Narva, in which the Russians were defeated. The long war against Sweden known as the Northern War, began with this battle in November 1700. It was started by the Russian Tsar, Peter the Great, who wanted to get back old Russian territory at the mouth of the Neva on the Baltic coast that had been captured by the Swedes. This was necessary to gain an outlet to the sea in order to be able to trade freely with Western Europe and develop industry and culture at home.

"Here cut"—so Nature gives command—
"Your window through on Europe; stand
Firm footed by the sea, unchanging!"

So wrote the celebrated Russian poet Alexander Pushkin in his poem **The Bronze Horseman**. However, this was very hard to do as Sweden then had the best army in Europe and a strong navy. Meanwhile, Russia was only beginning to build up a navy and army.

King Charles XII of Sweden was sure that after his defeat at Narva Peter the Great would not dare to go on with the war. "We have chased the Russian bear back into his lair," he said. However, Narva was only the beginning.

Russia built up a new army, constructed naval vessels and cannons.

A naval battle during the
Northern War [1700-21].



Little by little Russian troops won back a part of the coast on the Gulf of Finland. In 1703, at the mouth of the Neva River, the Tsar founded the city of St. Petersburg. Thousands of serfs were sent from all over Russia to build this city. Despite very grim conditions this "window through on Europe" was "cut." A few years later the Tsar made St. Petersburg the capital of the Russian Empire.

The Battle of Poltava

The war between Russia and Sweden had been going on for nine years now. Though Russia had already regained her old territories along the Baltic coast, King Charles XII had still not lost hope of defeating Peter. He decided to strike at Russia from the south and march onto Moscow through the Ukraine. Mazepa, the Ukraine's headman, betrayed Russia and entered into secret talks with the Swedes.

Poltava was the only fort barring the way into the country. For more than two months its heroic defenders held back the enemy until the main Russian force led by Peter the Great reached it.

The celebrated Battle of Poltava took place on June 27, 1709. The Russians took up stations north of the city. Earthen fortifications (redoubts) were quickly built on the Tsar's orders to shield the Russian army. This was the first time such fortifications were used in battle.

In the early morning, as the sun was rising the Swedes advanced on the Russian camp to find themselves exposed to cross-fire from Russian guns which had been mounted on the redoubts. After two hours of fighting the enemy ranks were thrown

into confusion. The Swedes had been dealt a cruel blow even before the battle had really started.

At nine o'clock in the morning Peter ordered the Russian army to march out of the camp and line up for battle. His orders were read out to the soldiers: "Men, the hour has come which will decide the destiny of our Fatherland."

The Swedish king gave the signal for his men to attack. The Russians marched out to meet the Swedes and hand-to-hand fighting commenced. At first the Swedes pushed the Russian centre back but Peter, at the head of an infantry regiment, forced the enemy back. He then commanded his cavalry to surround the enemy and his brave horsemen galloped forwards to take the enemy in the rear. With every minute the Russians' attack intensified.

Fleeing in panic the Swedish soldiers almost knocked down the stretcher on which lay their wounded King.

"Hold your ground! Shame!" he cried angrily. But his army would no longer obey. It was a complete defeat. Some twenty thousand Swedish soldiers and nearly all the generals surrendered. Only the Swedish King managed to escape with a small force.

Though Poltava dealt the Swedish army a crushing blow, the war had not ended yet. The Swedish navy had to be defeated. Peter's new Russian navy fought the experienced Swedish fleet several times and was victorious.

The long Northern War ended in full victory for Russia in 1721. Russia regained all her old territory on the Baltic coast as well as territory inhabited by Estonians, Letts and Karelians. She was now firmly entrenched on the Baltic coast.

14.

THE FORMATION OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Russia's New Capital

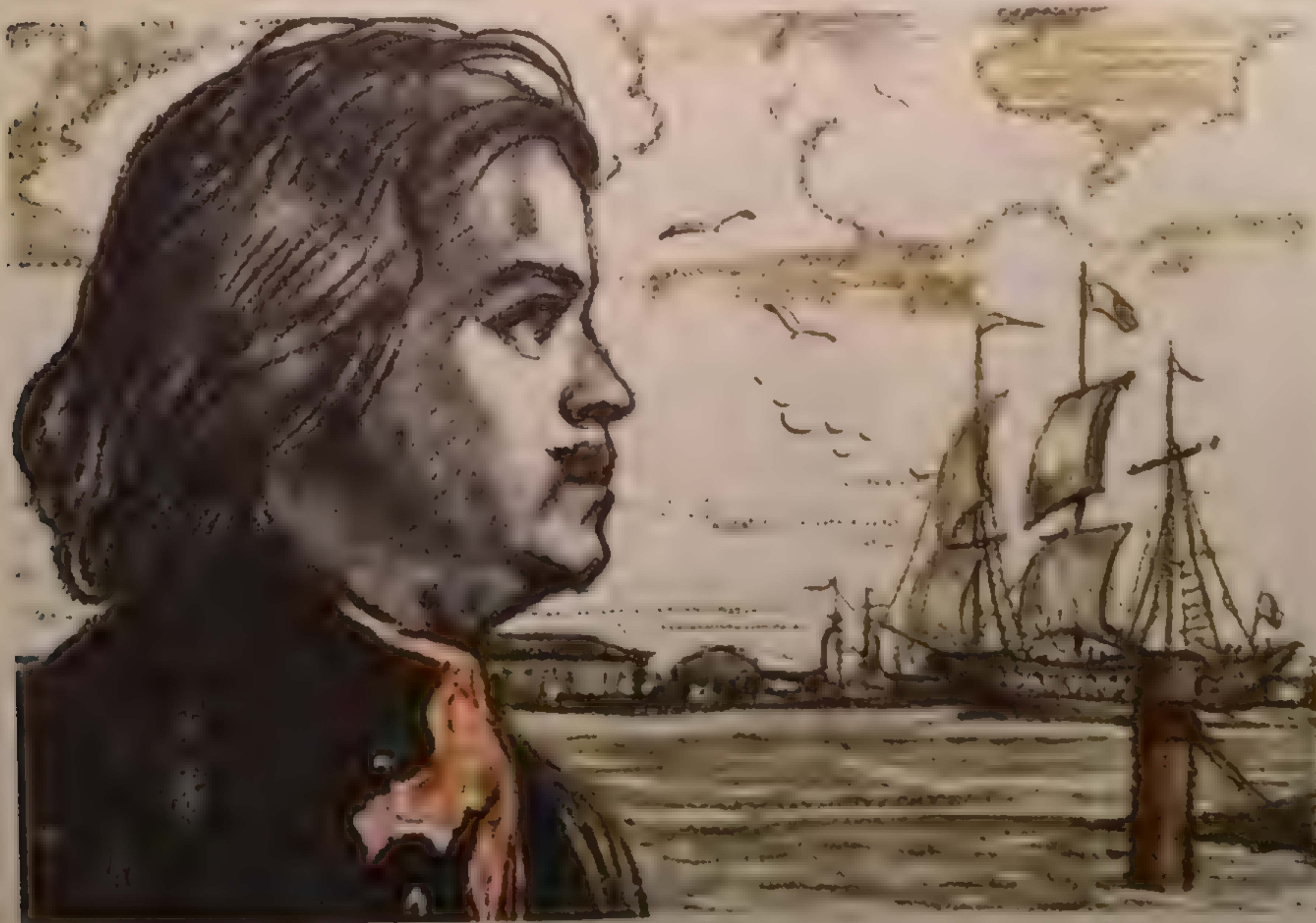
A cold biting wind blows in from the sea. Rain comes down in torrents. Still, through the raging elements one can hear the banging of hammers and shouts. A giant wearing a short green kaftan quickly walks along a street that is in the process of being built. The crowd of richly dressed courtiers can hardly keep up with him. This is the Tsar himself, Peter the Great, and it is he who has ordered the building of a new capital that is to be called St. Petersburg.

This new city was built under terrible conditions. The thousands of serfs that the Tsar had brought to this place every year worked knee deep in water. People died like flies from hunger, disease and the back-breaking work.

The first buildings to be put up in this new city were the Peter and Paul Fortress and the Tsar's own wooden cottage, both of which have survived to this day. Handsome bridges were erected across the Neva and its numerous tributaries and canals. Little by little a beautiful city appeared on what had been the desolate, swampy banks of the Neva.

Thus, thanks to the hard work of serf peasants the city of St. Petersburg,

Peter the Great.



now known as Leningrad, the USSR's second largest city, was built.

Russia under Peter the Great

The regular well-trained and well-disciplined Russian army and navy that Peter the Great built up in the early 18th century showed its mettle in the long and terrible war against Sweden. After Russia defeated Sweden, she became one of Europe's strongest powers.

Great changes took place in her economy, the level of cultural development and system of government. To fight the war and properly equip the army and navy it was necessary to have guns, cannons, gunpowder, canvas for sails and cloth for army uniforms. Gun foundries, armouries and canvas and cloth mills were built. The Tsar enjoyed boundless power. He ruled the country with the help of a large body of officials which was selected from among the nobles.

It was impossible to govern the country and command the army and navy without educated people. At the orders of Peter the Great schools were started to teach the children of the nobility mathematics, the handling of ships and artillery, medicine and foreign languages. Once in a while children from other classes would also be taken into these schools as the Tsar liked to promote capable and gifted people. As soon as they became officials and officers they were made members of the nobility. Some pupils were sent to continue their education in Britain, Holland or France.

Commerce and trade with other countries developed. Russia began to have a greater influence on international affairs. Her strength grew and she came to be known as the Russian Empire.

All the new changes in the country were ordered by Peter the Great and he himself took a hand in carrying them out. In many respects he was very unlike other tsars who had ruled Russia before him. He was an outstanding statesman, and a brilliant military leader who took part in many battles on land and sea. He was well educated for those times, having a good knowledge of mathematics, artillery and ships. He was also a good turner, carpenter, locksmith and blacksmith. His contemporaries considered him Russia's best ship-maker.

Still, he was an aristocratic ruler. He was often rough and cruel and like the other tsars cared nothing for the lives or sufferings of working people. He did all in his power to strengthen the power of the landowners.

The power of the Russian Empire was created by the heavy forced labour of the people. Thousands of serfs were forced to work at factories, dig canals and build cities. They were also forced to serve in the army almost their whole lives only returning home when they were old and crippled. The people were ruined by the heavy taxes.

The peasants stubbornly resisted the yoke of serfdom, fleeing in thousands to border areas. The runaway serfs were caught, harshly punished and returned to their masters. The peasant serfs, poor townspeople and oppressed peoples rebelled time and again.

Thus, the uprising led in the Don area by Kondraty Bulavin continued for two years, before it, like other peasant revolts, was cruelly crushed by the tsarist army. Bulavin himself was killed.

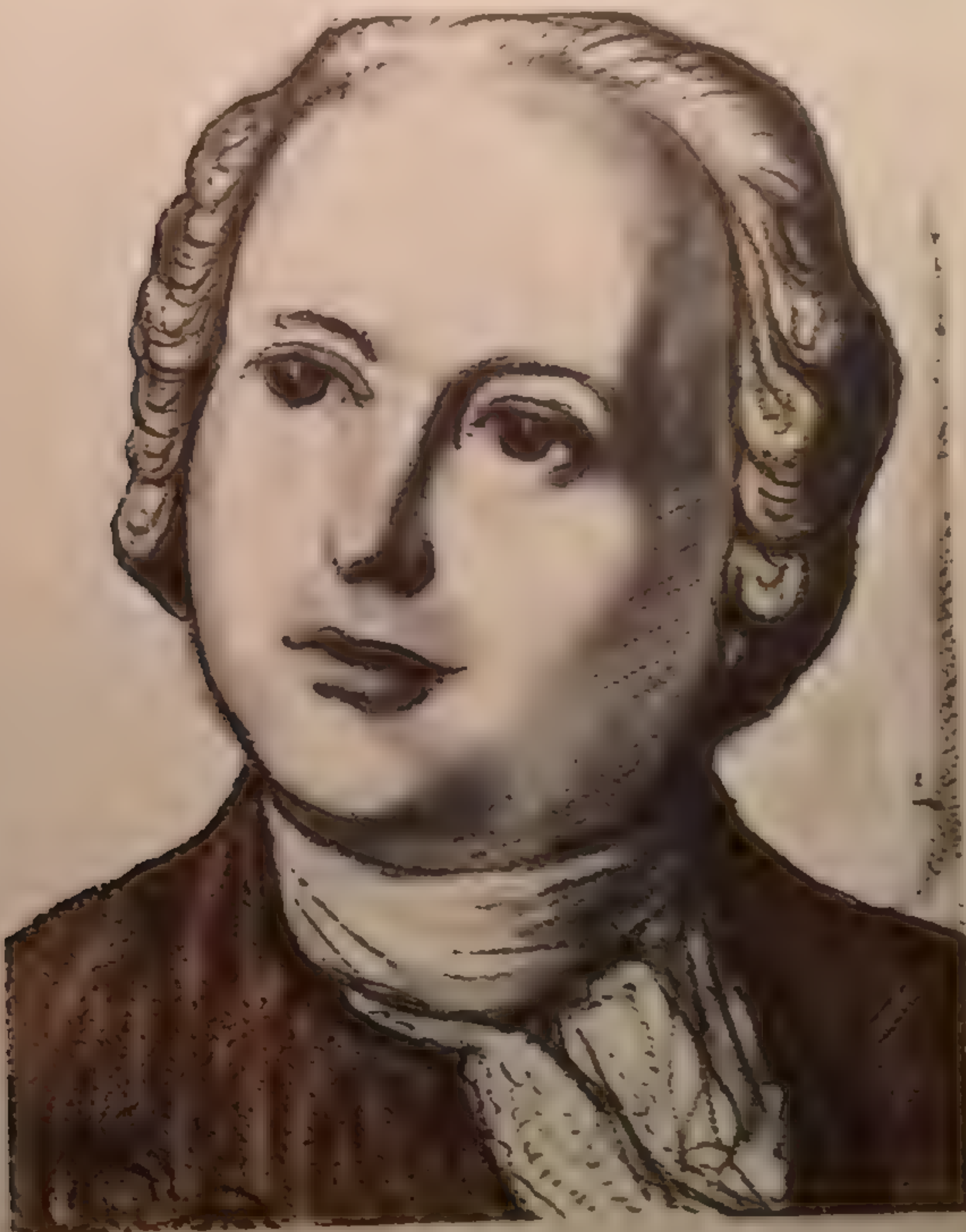
Under Peter the Great the treatment of serfs grew even worse.

15.
**MIKHAIL
LOMONOSOV**

Any visitor to Moscow can see on Lenin Hills the stately building of Moscow University, the country's biggest establishment of higher learning. All the Soviet nationalities as well as many other nations are represented in its student body.

The university is named after the great Russian scholar Mikhail Lomonosov, because it was due to his efforts and persistence that the first university in Russia was founded in 1755.

Lomonosov was the son of a fisherman who lived near the town of Archangel. His father tried to bring up his boy to be strong and agile and taught him to row and steer.



The great Russian scientist
Mikhail Lomonosov.

But the boy wanted to study. As there was no school in his village he was taught to read and write by a neighbour who had received some schooling. Still more eager for knowledge, at the age of nineteen he set out for Moscow. With great difficulty, and with hardly any money he reached Moscow after three weeks of travelling with a train of wagons carrying frozen fish. In order to enter school he pretended to be the son of a nobleman as peasant children were not enrolled then.

His younger schoolmates ridiculed him, crying: "Look what a fool of twenty has come to school!" But they soon stopped as he was very strong and an amazingly good pupil. His life was extremely hard. His schoolmates got money from their parents but all that Lomonosov had were the few kopecks the school pupils received once a month. This was just enough for bread. But despite his hardships, Lomonosov applied himself to his studies with great diligence. He quickly overtook the other students and later with a group of the best pupils was sent abroad to continue his studies. Several years later he returned to Russia and began to work in St. Petersburg.

Lomonosov was Russia's first really great scholar. He made many important discoveries in physics, chemistry and the natural sciences. He was also interested in history and literature and wrote poetry. He was the first to compile a Russian grammar. With his pupils he created a huge mosaic depicting the battle of Poltava. This was not easy to do; it took him three years and three thousand experiments to melt the many bits of glass of the most diverse colours and tints that were used to make up this mosaic.

Lomonosov had a deep love for his people and knew that they would have a great future. He urged them to study their own country well. This peasant boy, who had become such a great scholar, wanted all his people to be literate and educated. That was why he spared neither time nor energy to start a university with its own secondary school. When after long efforts the university and school were opened Lomonosov saw that not only children of noblemen would be accepted but all young people who were eager to study. Sons of artisans, soldiers and minor officials could also attend. The great scholar used to say: "At the university the student who is the most honoured is the student who has studied the most; as for whose son he is, that is of no concern."

The founding of the Moscow University was a great event in the history of Russian cultural development. The university's printshop published many books—manuals, scientific treatises and works of literature. Before this Moscow had had only one printshop which put out mainly religious books.

Many university students and pupils of Lomonosov carried forward his traditions. They also became leading scientists and professors. In the more than two hundred years since Moscow University was founded, it has produced many remarkable Russians, among them great scientists, writers and revolutionaries. The Soviet people take deep pride in these people and their achievements.

16.

INVENTOR OF THE STEAM ENGINE

One of Lomonosov's contemporaries was the celebrated inventor Ivan Polzunov. Though it was extremely

hard for this son of an ordinary soldier to obtain an education, he achieved his ambition and went to school, but not for long. Before he was fourteen he was put to work at an iron foundry.

He spent nearly a quarter of a century working at plants in the Urals and the Altai. After the day's work was done he would sit far into the night studying physics, mechanics and chemistry though his pay was barely enough for food, clothes and paper for the blueprints and drawings he made.

But it was not only his own hardships that tormented him. He could not bear to see the back-breaking toil of the serf workers. Something had to be done, he believed, to help them and lighten their work.

Up to then factories had been built on the banks of rivers where dams were put up to make the falling water set machines in motion. Polzunov wanted to devise a machine that could be placed anywhere. This was an ambitious idea as not even England, the most technically and industrially advanced country of the time, had such a machine.

After many sleepless nights and painstaking efforts Polzunov finally produced the blueprints of a new machine. Steam would be made to set a machine in motion and thus lighten work. He mailed his blueprints to St. Petersburg but it took a long time before the government agreed to provide the money to build this machine. Polzunov spent another three years working hard and had almost completed the machine when he died before he was able to test it.

However, the steam engine was tried out and successfully functioned for several years. But in tsarist feudal

Russia few sought to lighten labour. Polzunov's steam engine was dismantled and his name forgotten.

However, Soviet historians were able to find these blueprints, as well as Polzunov's letters to St. Petersburg and a list of all his inventions. Though Polzunov died at the age of 38, he devoted all of his short life as he himself wrote "to the benefit of the people" so as "to lighten the labour of the generations to come."

Another great 18th-century inventor was Ivan Kulibin who devised a marvelous clock, a telescope, a reflector lantern and many other amazing mechanisms and instruments. However, many of the things he invented could not be put to use in feudal Russia and remained on the drawing board.

17.

PEASANT WAR

Nearly a hundred years had passed since Stepan Razin's peasant uprising. The life of the serfs was even harder. Now many of them had to work on their master's fields six days a week. There was only night-time and Sundays in which they could work for themselves.

Meanwhile the landowners lived in the lap of luxury. They built handsome houses with columns that stood in large parks where broad shady avenues led to fountains and ponds with swans and gaily painted boats. There were stables for thoroughbred horses and kennels for hunting dogs. There were also large barns, kitchens and cellars. All of this was built by serfs and was looked after by scores of serfs, who worked on the landowners' estates.

The landowners brutally mistreated their serfs and had them flogged for



The peasant war of 1773-75.

the slightest misdemeanour. There were some landowners who thought up the cruellest tortures and who flogged their serfs to death.

The serfs who worked in mines, foundries and on building sites also had a very hard life, working as many as 16-18 hours a day. The mines frequently caved in and many lives were lost. People died of sickness and slave labour. The overseers beat them whenever they showed signs of tiring. Young boys also worked in the mines alongside their fathers and older brothers.

In the 18th century the serfs were completely under the rule of the landowners. Catherine the Great forbade

them even to complain about their masters. If anyone dared to do that he was not only sent off to chain gangs but also flogged, branded on the forehead, and had his nose torn and ears cut off.

Nevertheless, the peasants believed that one day a "good" tsar would come to free them from the wicked landowners. It was rumoured among the Urals Cossacks that such a tsar had appeared. This man who called himself tsar and grandson of Peter the Great was actually a Don Cossack

►
Yemelyan Pugachyov, the leader of the peasant war.



whose name was Yemelyan Pugachyov. He had seen a great deal in life, been all over Russia and had fought in military campaigns. Everywhere he saw the grim and hopeless life of working people. He called on them to rise against their masters. By 1773 he had gathered a large army of former serfs, Urals Cossacks, serf workers and working people living in the Urals and along the Volga whom tsarism so cruelly oppressed. Among these people were Bashkirs, Tartars, Mari, Chuvashi and Kazakhs. Pugachyov and his peasants laid siege to the city of Orenburg. However, the large army that Catherine the Great sent against him defeated him. He withdrew from Orenburg and decided to march towards the Urals. From there he sailed down the Kama and the Volga towards Moscow. He believed that people would join his army in these places which had not yet become involved in the uprising. And they did. The uprising spread. Pugachyov and his men captured cities and towns, set fire to landed estates and hanged the hated landowners and officials. For two years a bitter peasant war was fought throughout the vast area between the Urals and the Volga.

The frightened landowners fled for their lives. Martial law was proclaimed in Moscow. Catherine herself believed it might be better to leave St. Petersburg for a safer place. She ordered a crack army to be mobilized and sent against Pugachyov.

Though Pugachyov and his men fought bravely, they behaved just like the rebel peasants in Stepan Razin's time. After they freed their home villages they would divide the landowner's riches and estates among themselves. Many did not want to go far

from home. No wonder Pugachyov found it impossible to organize a well-trained and disciplined army.

Outside Kazan, Pugachyov was defeated by the tsarist army. With a small force he fled south in the hope of forming a new army there to continue the struggle. However, the rich Cossacks seized him and handed him over to the tsarist authorities. He was put in chains and brought to Moscow in a cage.

Imagine the following scene. It is a frosty winter day in the year of 1775. Crowds fill Bolotnaya Square in Moscow, where a scaffold has been erected. Several ranks of soldiers are drawn up around it to keep away the endless sea of people. As Pugachyov is brought out there is sobbing and weeping. Many clench their fists in anger. Pugachyov steps out on the scaffold, looks at the vast throng and then bows low in all directions. The executioner grabs hold of him and swings his axe.

Catherine took harsh reprisals against the rebel peasants. Rafts were sent down rivers, carrying gallows on which dead men still hung.

This peasant uprising was crushed because it was badly organized and because the serfs believed in a "good" tsar who would come and free them. However, serfdom in Russia suffered a heavy blow. Pugachyov was not forgotten. The peasants believed that one day the landowners would have to pay for their crimes.

18. SUVOROV TAKES ISMAIL

For a long time Russia fought for an outlet to the Baltic and Black Seas. This was most important for the

country's development as at that time the sea provided the most convenient and profitable means of contact with other countries.

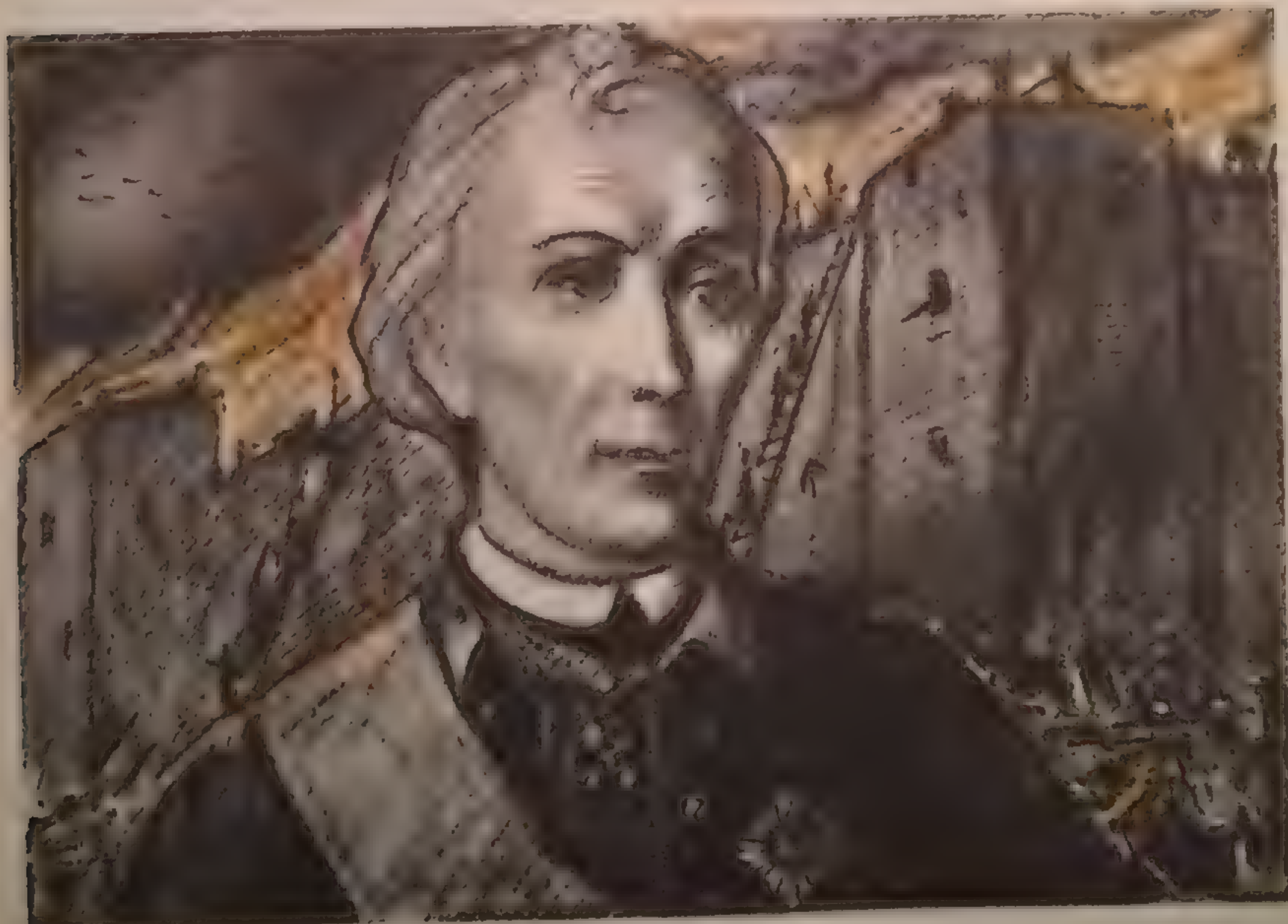
By the early 18th century after Russia had won the war against Sweden she gained an outlet to the Baltic Sea. However, the Crimea and the northern Black Sea coast had been captured by Turkey. The Turkish navy ruled the Black Sea. The Crimean khans who were the vassals of the Turkish Sultan often led attacks on Russia's southern borders. Time and again the Turks overran the lands of the Caucasian and Transcaucasian peoples.

In the late 18th century, Russia waged successful wars against Turkey.

The Crimea, the Dnieper estuary and Moldavian lands were regained and united with Russia. In a convenient Crimean harbour the Russians built the fort of Sebastopol for their newly created Black Sea fleet. However, the Turkish Sultan could not accept the loss of these possessions. The war continued.

The Russian advance was checked by the strong Turkish fort of Ismail near the mouth of the Danube. It was defended by heavy guns and a Turkish garrison of 35,000 men. The tall stone walls around the city were additionally protected by a deep moat filled with water and ten-metre-high earthen ramparts.

Alexander Suvorov, the great Russian general.





The battle of Borodino was the key encounter of the 1812 Patriotic War.

The great Russian general Alexander Suvorov, a highly educated man who had a good knowledge of eight languages, mathematics and history, was appointed to command the Russian troops that were to take Ismail. He arrived at Ismail in December, 1790. He called a military council which decided to take the fortress by storm after a week of preparations. Suvorov ordered fortifications, similar to those of Ismail, to be built to train the men for the coming attack. The soldiers were instructed how to cross moats and climb walls at night. The general himself showed young soldiers how

to handle the bayonet in hand-to-hand fighting.

"Ismail's walls are tall and its moats deep but we must take it," he told his men. However, first he gave the enemy a chance to surrender. "The Danube will sooner cease to flow and the sky fall before Ismail will surrender," the Turks replied.

Russian guns opened fire as dawn broke. Russian forces advanced to storm the fort from every side. A flotilla of boats quickly crossed the broad Danube. Under heavy enemy fire soldiers jumped ashore. Other regiments swam across the moat and

Serf Russia



braving Turkish gunfire climbed the walls.

By eight o'clock in the morning the Russians had already broken into the town. They fought for each street and house. Their cannons were placed along roads. Towards evening the battle was over. The surviving remnants of the Turkish garrison surrendered.

Meanwhile Admiral Fyodor Ushakov and his Russian navy fought bold and decisive engagements on the Black Sea. He would concentrate his main attack on the biggest enemy warships, trying to put out of action first the flagship which carried the command-

er of the fleet. Then from close at hand, he would open fire with all his guns at the other smaller warships. As a rule the enemy would scatter and turn tail. Admiral Ushakov successfully used this manoeuvre in the decisive engagement, during which he destroyed a Turkish squadron with hardly any loss to himself.

The capture of Ismail and Russian naval victories compelled the Turkish Sultan to beg for peace. The whole northern coast of the Black Sea was now Russian. No longer did the Russians, Ukrainians and Moldavians living in the southern steppes suffer from Turkish attacks.



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THE PATRIOTIC WAR OF 1812

The Napoleonic Invasion

French soldiers were hastily erecting bridges across the frontier river of the Niemen. Night was falling but they had not finished with their task. "Hurry!" the officer cried. "The Emperor wants this done today." At last the bridges were completed and on the night of June 23, 1812, the French Army of 600,000 men began to cross. The invasion of Russia had begun. This enormous army, larger than any other at the time, was led against Russia by the French Emperor, Napoleon. He had already seized many European countries and had now turned to Russia. He had under his command not only Frenchmen but also soldiers from the countries he had seized.

When the war began the French army was three times the size of the Russian army. The Russians retreated, holding the enemy at bay in heavy fighting. They avoided a general engagement as they were still not strong enough. Meanwhile the French army looted and plundered everything on its way.

The people rose up to liberate their country. They formed partisan detachments in many places occupied by the enemy in Lithuania, Byelorussia and Western Russia.

Despite heavy losses the French continued to advance drawing closer to Moscow, the heart of Russia. In this hour of danger the great military leader Mikhail Kutuzov, one of Suvorov's pupils, who had taken part in the storming of Ismail, was appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian army. The Russian soldiers who were eager to crush the French invaders gave Kutuzov a rousing welcome.

The Battle of Borodino

Kutuzov arrived at the front in August, 1812, and at once set about preparing for a general battle. A large open field near the village of Borodino, 110 kilometres west of Moscow, was chosen as the site for the battle.

The field of Borodino lay between two roads leading to Moscow. Kutuzov stationed his army so as to straddle both these roads thus barring the enemy's advance.

The battle began at daybreak on August 26. The signal was fired by a French cannon. At once 400 pieces of artillery began to bombard fortifications defended by troops under the brave Russian General Bagration. Napoleon wanted to strike his main blow at this point. He sought to crush the Russian left flank and by taking Kutuzov in the rear, smash his army and thus win the day.

On the orders of their generals the French regiments attacked Bagration's positions again and again. The Russians fought heroically. Even wounded men did not want to leave the battlefield. However, French pressure increased. "Advance!" Bagration cried, sweeping out his sword, but at that moment he was heavily wounded by an exploding cannon ball. That day Bagration's force repulsed seven enemy attacks.

The fighting was especially fierce in the Russian centre held by the Kurgannaya battery, where the regiments of General Rayevsky fought. Hundreds of guns spat fire, cannon-balls exploded thunderously, bullets whistled, and the dead and wounded fell all around.

Kutuzov ordered Russian cavalry regiments to gallop round the enemy



The Russian nation rose in arms against the French invaders.

positions and attack the French from the rear. This caused consternation among the French. Napoleon did not dare to send his last crack regiments into battle.

As evening fell the guns gradually stopped firing. The battle was over. The field of Borodino presented a terrible sight. Never before had the French conquerors seen so many dead—the French lost 60,000 men, the Russians, 40,000. But the Russians stood as defiant and unflinching as before. Napoleon had failed to destroy the Russians and force them into ignominious flight.

The Russians began to prepare for another battle. But after counting his forces, Kutuzov decided at dawn on August 27 to retreat towards Moscow. To win a decisive victory over the enemy he needed more men and ammunition. But they could not be found at that moment. Shortly afterwards the Russians surrendered Moscow without a battle.

"The loss of Moscow does not mean the loss of Russia," Kutuzov said.

"We must preserve our army."

The Russians set up camp 100 kilometres south of Moscow. They nee-



Napoleon's "Grand Army"
on its way back from Russia.

ded time to gather an army large enough to crush the French.

On September 2, the French reached the walls of Moscow. Looking at the ancient Russian capital from afar, Napoleon waited for the city fathers to present him with the keys of Moscow as a sign of submission. But, wrote the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin:

Here, drunk with conquest,
Napoleon waited with his hosts
To see a Moscow on her knees
Present the ancient Kremlin's keys; —
But all his waiting was in vain:
For never did my Moscow deign
To offer gifts or bow before
The hero, though the day was lost.

Napoleon entered an empty city. More than half its people had left it.

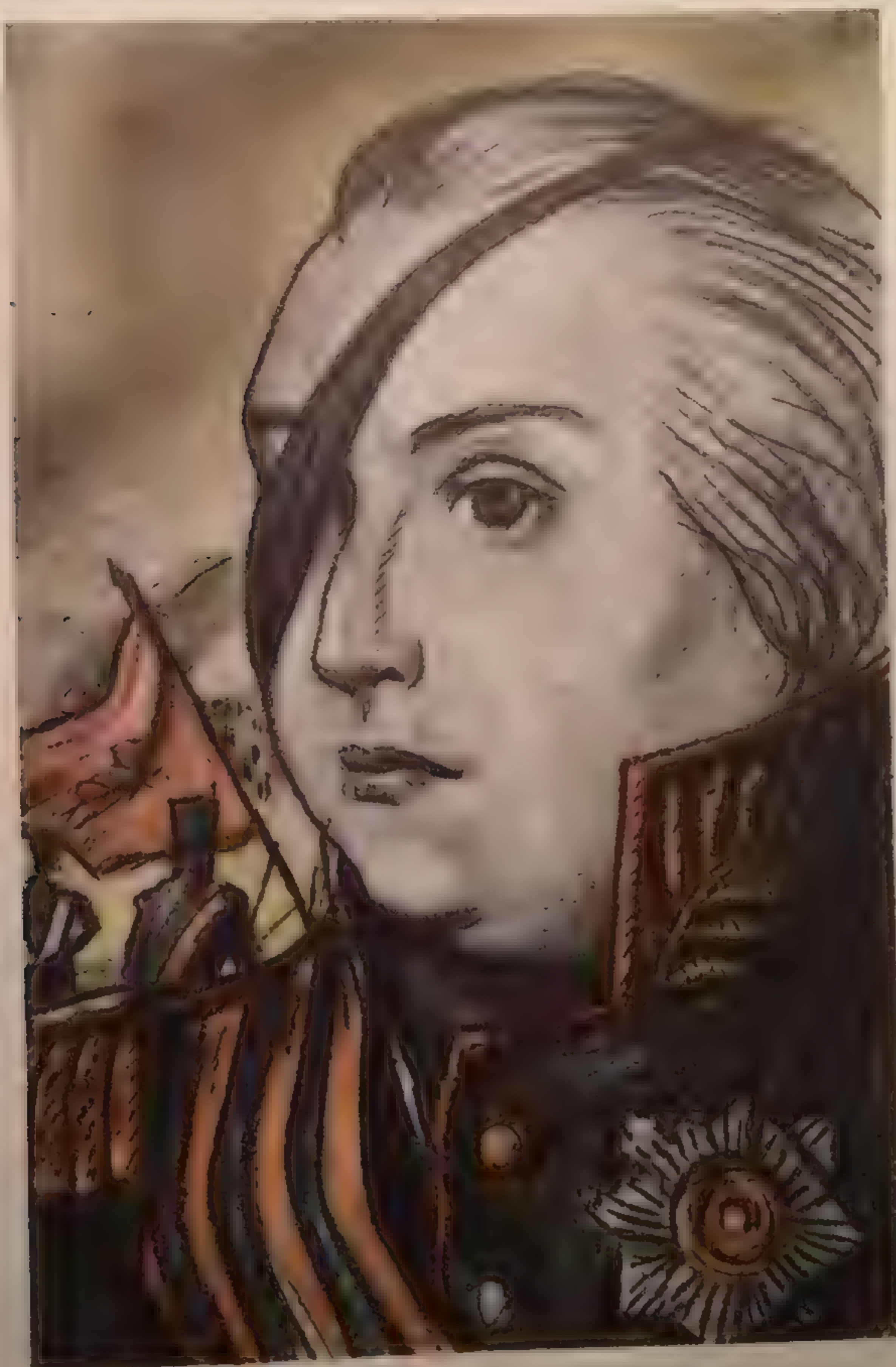
The Defeat of Napoleon

Napoleon hoped that after he had captured Moscow the Russians would beg for peace. But this did not happen.

The invaders looted the city and shot the peaceful inhabitants who had stayed behind. Bonfires were lit in the streets and Moscow caught fire. The fire raged for six days. Nearly the entire city burned down.

The partisans fought the invaders tooth and nail. The French Army melted away without even giving battle. After a little over a month in Moscow the French realized that they were trapped. Napoleon tried to make peace with Russia but Kutuzov refused to enter into talks.

On the morning of October 7, 1812, the French began their retreat from Moscow. They took away with them the spoils they had plundered. Napoleon ordered the Kremlin to be blown up in revenge for his failure to conquer the Russians. However, patriotic Muscovites managed to ex-



Mikhail Kutuzov commanded the Russian troops which defeated Napoleon.

tinguish the fuses and the Kremlin was saved.

The French retreated from Moscow southwards. Napoleon wanted to withdraw from Russia along roads that had not been ravaged by war. However, the Russians blocked his path and in fierce fighting compelled the French to retreat along the same roads that they had plundered when advancing on Moscow.

Russian soldiers and partisans followed hot on the enemy's heels. Some of the partisan formations were led by ordinary peasants. Thus Gerasim Kurin had under him some 6,000 well-armed men. Private Yermolai Chetvertakov's force boldly engaged large groups of the enemy. In the guerilla detachments there were also some peasant women. A peasant woman, Vasilisa Kozhina, led a force that consisted of women and boys and girls armed with pitchforks, scythes and axes. The French suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Russian soldiers and partisans. The path of their retreat was strewn with dead soldiers and horses, broken carts and deserted guns. Then the severe frosts struck.

Napoleon hurried to get his decimated army out of Russia as soon as he could. In November they reached the Berezina River where the final major battle of this war was fought. Here Kutuzov had caught up with the enemy and threatened to surround and take Napoleon and his army captive. Napoleon ordered a bridge to be hastily thrown across the Berezina and his army to cross it, leaving all their artillery and baggage trains behind. Russian heavy guns bombarded the bridge. Thousands of French soldiers were killed or drowned and thousands more were taken prisoner.

After this the French retreat turned into a panic-stricken flight. Napoleon deserted the remnants of his army and sped post-haste back to Paris. Before invading Russia Napoleon had said: "In three years I will rule the world... Russia remains but I shall crush it." In but a few months after his invasion of Russia his "Grand Army" had ceased to exist. Only 30 thousand of his men managed to get home.

The war of 1812 ended in the complete defeat of the enemy. Napoleon's sway over Europe was now undermined.

20. THE DECEMBRISTS

December 14, 1825 started in St. Petersburg in a most unusual way. From early morning regiments had been marching towards the monument to Peter the Great that stands on Senate Square. They were not going to take part in a review nor a ceremonial parade. Their officers had led them there to depose the tsar by force.

The soldiers lined up in rectangular formation. Young men in uniform and civilian clothes came up to talk with them. The soldiers stood there patiently, shifting from foot to foot. Gradually the square filled, as more soldiers and seamen marched out to the roll of drums.

Suddenly several horsemen, in gold-frogged parade uniforms, rode out from the other side of the square. Among them a tall man with a pale face and cruel eyes stood out. This was the Tsar Nicholas I. It was the day of his coronation. Quite unexpectedly



The Decembrists.

for the new Tsar and his courtiers this day began with a rebellion.

The revolt had been organized by a handful of young noblemen, most of whom were army officers. Nearly all of them had fought as young men with great courage in the war of 1812 and had seen for themselves how heroically the Russian people had fought the French invaders. These young men wanted to free the people from serfdom. They well understood that neither the tsar nor the landowners would surrender their power and wealth voluntarily. They understood that the people could be freed only by means of armed force. To prepare

for the revolt these progressive aristocrats organized secret revolutionary societies. The most outstanding leaders were Colonel Pavel Pestel and the poet Kondraty Ryleyev.

The revolutionaries thought the day of the coronation of the new Tsar would be best suited to their plans. They wanted to capture the Winter Palace, arrest the Tsar and his ministers, abolish serfdom and do away with the autocratic system. However, they thought they could do this with loyal regiments alone. These aristocratic revolutionaries were sorry for the people and wanted to help them, but like all aristocrats they were afraid of a truly popular uprising. They want-



The great Russian poet,
Alexander Pushkin.

ed to act "for the people but without the people."

The frightened Tsar sent his cour-tiers, even the head of the church of St. Petersburg, to persuade the reg-iments to leave. The priest tried to frighten the rebels with the wrath of God. But nothing helped, the soldiers would not leave. Then the Tsar sent his horseguards against them but they were beaten back. The mutineers were prepared to advance and were only waiting for the order. However, this order did not come as the offi-cers saw they had too little strength to attack.

As the early winter twilight quickly descended over the city, troops loyal to the Tsar surrounded the square. The Tsar ordered artillery to be brought up. The first cannon-ball whistled over the heads of the muti-neers but the next one exploded right in their midst killing and wound-ing many. As more gunshots mowed down the soldiers, they turned and ran.

Soon everything was over. At night the dead and the wounded with them were tossed into the Neva beneath the ice. That same night the arrested revolutionaries were hauled before the Tsar in the Winter Palace

for interrogation. Later Pestel, Rylev and three other leaders of the uprising were hanged in the Peter and Paul Fortress. The rest were sent off to do hard labour in Siberia.

These aristocratic revolutionaries came to be known as the Decembrists. They were the first in Russia to take up arms in a conscious, organized way against the tsar and serfdom. However, they were defeated because they did not look to the people for support.

The great poet Alexander Pushkin was a good friend of many of the Decembrists. He dedicated to them his celebrated "Message to Siberia" in

which he voiced his belief that the struggle they had begun would one day be victorious. He wrote:

The heavy-hanging chains will fall,
The walls will crumble at a word;
And Freedom greet you in the light,
And brothers give you back the sword.

In response the deported Decembrists wrote that they were sure their efforts had not been in vain, that "the spark will kindle a flame."

Their efforts were indeed not in vain. As the years passed more fighters for the freedom of the people appeared.

RUSSIA UNDER CAPITALISM

21. THE END OF SERFDOM

The time was early March in the year of 1861, the place—a small snow-swept village in the Kazan Region. Tufts of rotten thatch stuck up through the snow on the rooftops of the squalid huts lining the road. Some of the huts had no chimneys, the smoke from the fireplaces came out through the door or through the low small windows.

It was indeed an unusual day. As the church bells tolled loud and far, the entire population, young and old, ran out into the street. There were shouts that the tsar had decreed that now everybody was free. The church was packed with people. By the altar stood the priest in his rich robes. Next to him stood an official who had come specially from Kazan to read out the royal edict announcing the liberation of the peasants.

The peasants were told that now they were no longer serfs who could be bought, sold, given away or exchanged. Now the landowner could no longer marry them off by force or forbid them to move to some other place, go to work at a factory or become artisans. The peasants drank in every word. This, they thought, would mean a new life for them—the millions of Russian serfs.

How much land would each peasant get? What about the labour rent? And the tax? These matters could be decided only with the landowner. And so the peasants went off to see him. Before they had always tried to go past this tall handsome white-columned mansion, as here they could expect nothing but trouble. But on this day they boldly

marched up to the door, taking off their caps by habit.

"Why are you here?" the master severely demanded. "We have been set free and we want to know how much land we are going to get," came shouts. "Each peasant and his family will get a plot of land but of my choice," the master explained. "You will have to pay for it. Until you've paid for it you will have to

continue with the labour rent and the tax. If you think that you won't have enough land, I can give you more, provided you pay for it." The more the landowner explained the angrier the peasants grew. How were they to feed themselves and their families, they wondered. Where were they to get the money for the land? Where could their cattle graze, as the meadows, forests and rivers were still in

The composer Mikhail Glinka.



the possession of the master? And besides everything else they had to pay state taxes. "This is not real freedom!" they cried. They thought their former master wanted to deceive them.

In a neighbouring village one Anton Petrov, a peasant who had received some amount of schooling, interpreted the royal edict in his own fashion. He told his fellow-villagers and peasants from the neighbouring villages: "All the land is yours. The master owns only the hills and the gullies. He is not entitled to a stick of wood from the forest. Should he step outside of his land tell him to go away. If he doesn't, chop off his head! You don't have to pay the tax and continue with the labour rent!"

"That's real freedom!" the peasants cried.

An uprising broke out. The peasants seized the landed estates and divided up the grain from the granaries of their former masters among themselves.

The Tsar ordered troops sent to the village. The commanding general told the peasants to go away. When they cried that they would rather die, the general ordered his soldiers to fire on the crowd. The peasants turned and fled, leaving many killed and wounded behind.

Such peasant uprisings broke out in many places of the multinational Russian Empire, but all were harshly suppressed. Realizing that the peasants would rise up against the Tsar's edict, the government sent out troops in advance in order quickly to put down these revolts.

This is how the peasants were "freed" in 1861. Why did the Tsar and his officials themselves "voluntarily" end serfdom? Because the peas-

ant movement against the landowners was growing bigger every year and it was quite possible that a general peasant uprising might break out that would be much stronger even than in the times of Pugachyov. Alexander II, the Tsar, told the landowners: "If we don't abolish serfdom the people will do it themselves."

Serfdom also stood in the way of further economic development. Industry advanced very slowly, with very few factories and railways being built as there were not enough free workers. Serf peasants made up most of Russia's population. Agriculture was also hindered by serfdom. The peasants tilled the land with great reluctance and harvests became worse every year. Russia fell further and further behind other countries where serfdom had been abolished long ago.

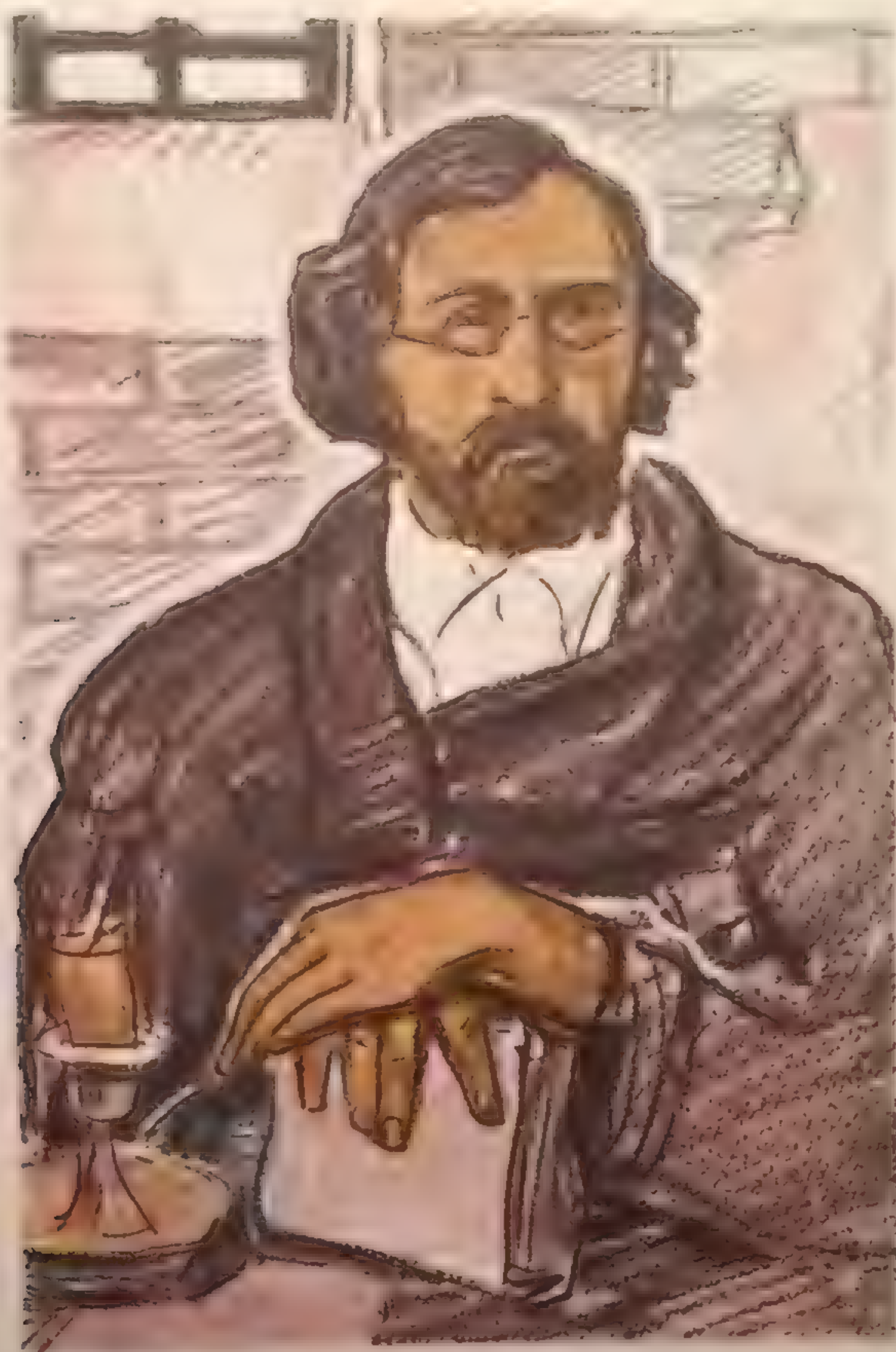
This is why the Tsar and the landowners had to abolish serfdom. But they "freed" the serfs in such a way that they were left beggars.

Nikolai Chernyshevsky

Russia's finest progressive people spoke out in defence of the persecuted and unfortunate people. Their leader, the revolutionary writer and scholar Nikolai Chernyshevsky, told the peasants to put no faith in the Tsar and the landowners who were wickedly deceiving the people, and to join the revolutionary movement.

The tsarist authorities arrested Chernyshevsky and after holding him for two years in a dark dungeon in the terrible prison of the Peter and Paul Fortress, sent him off to Siberia. But even in this far-away place he constituted a threat to the tsarist authorities. They wanted him to "repent" and give up his beliefs. They

Nikolai Chernyshevsky, the indomitable fighter for his people's freedom.



hoped that severe punishment had crushed his willpower, and suggested he beg the Tsar for pardon. But he scornfully refused. He spent more than twenty years in prison, doing hard labour or in exile. But to the end of his days he was loyal to the cause of the revolution and the people. His life presented an example which many of the fighters for freedom followed. Whole generations of revolutionaries

were brought up on the books he wrote.

Among Chernyshevsky's comrades were the great poets Nikolai Nekrasov and Taras Shevchenko.

22. RUSSIA TURNS CAPITALIST

The end of serfdom brought about great changes in Russia. The country



The composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky.

quickly turned capitalist. Many factories, mines and railways were built. Before 1861, Russia had only two big railways, but afterwards more railways were built that connected Moscow and St. Petersburg with cities and towns in the Ukraine and the Baltic Region, along the Volga and in the Caucasus. The urban population speedily grew due to the poor peasants who came to towns ready to take any jobs they could get.

In fact after the abolition of serfdom only a small portion of the peasants were able to quickly pay the money demanded for the land given them and even buy more. These were the most rich people in the village—kulaks, as they were called. They hired the poorer peasants to work their lands from morning till night for a small pay. The kulaks also grew rich by loaning flour to hungry peasants at the 100-per-cent interest.

Thus, the abolition of serfdom in 1861 had brought to life a new class of oppressors. Debts ruined the poorer peasants, who left the countryside to look for work in the cities and towns.

At a Capitalist Factory

Coughing hard the sick man rose with difficulty from his bed and sat down to write an application to his employer. "Please, I beg you to help me, I worked for 23 years at your factory. But now that I am sick I cannot work at all and soon will starve to death." On this appeal the employer wrote: "Give him eight roubles." And then a few months later he had a chance to display his generosity once more: "Pay twenty roubles towards funeral expenses."

The capitalists did not care about the health and lives of their workers.

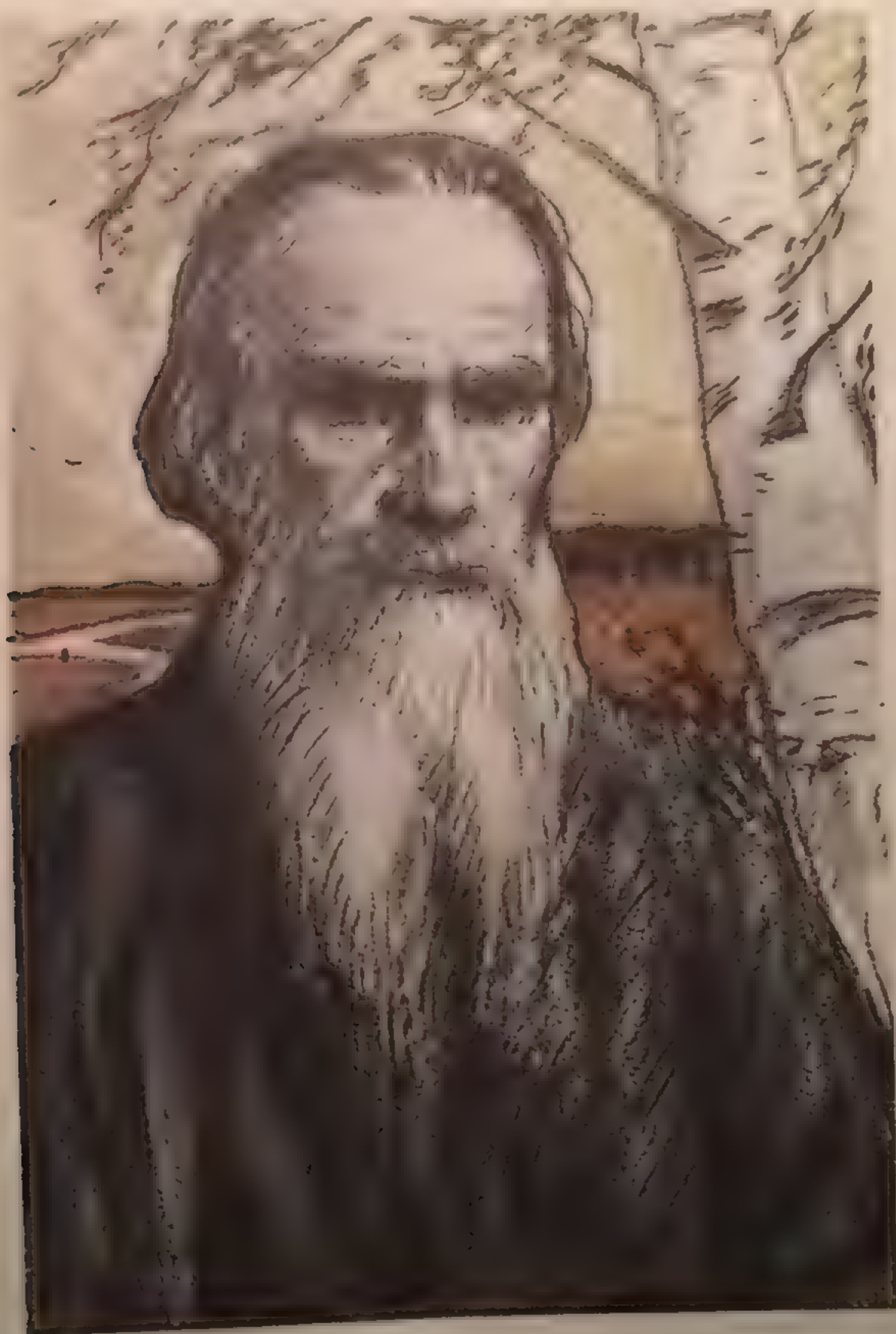
Many factories and mills were built

in Russia after the abolition of serfdom. The work was very hard, but there were always more people who wanted work than could be employed. People begged for jobs in order not to die of hunger.

The factory hooter summoned the workers to their jobs when it was still dark. The shops were airless and small, because the owner did not want to waste his money on building

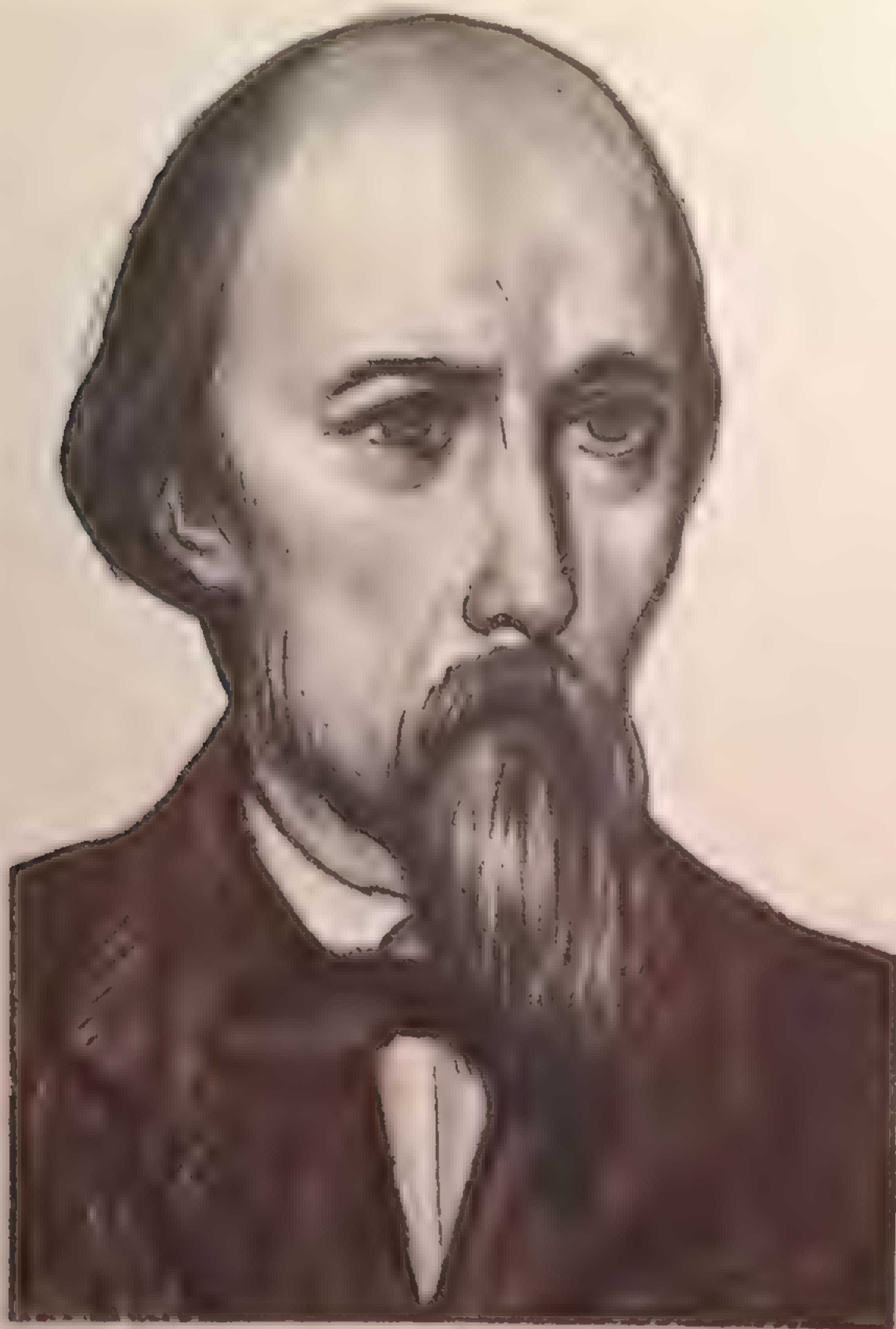
decent workshops with ventilation. The workers working in these shops soon got tired and had a hard time managing the machines. Sometimes they lost a leg or an arm. The crippled men would be given a few roubles and turned out of their jobs. There were always plenty of other workers to take their place.

To increase their profits the capitalists hired women and children at



The writer Leo Tolstoi.

The poet Nikolai Nekrasov.



half pay. It was particularly hard for the children, who, though they did as much work as the grown-ups, got several times less money. The worker-revolutionary Vasili Gerasimov has described in his memoirs the sad life of such a child worker. This man went to work at a large textile mill at the age of twelve, shortly after serfdom was ended.

He and other children of his age were made to start work at four o'clock in the morning. They continued their back-breaking toil till eight o'clock in the evening. "Though we were worn out," he writes, "at nine o'clock in the evening we were made to go to school where we were taught or rather tortured till eleven o'clock. Here we

were taught the three R's. Of course we made very bad progress. How could we learn anything at such a late hour? We were afraid of the teachers and some of us fainted when the teacher boxed our ears or beat us with his fist. We were tired and as we expected to be slapped or beaten at any moment we learned nothing.

"At the mills we were often flogged in punishment. Once I accidentally broke a brush and was given twenty-five lashes. Another time I was given fifty lashes for riding on the lift from the fourth to the third floor. I was so heavily beaten that I was black and blue all over. We children would be made to stand on our knees for two hours or more on bits of broken brick and on salt. We were dragged by the hair and beaten with belts. In short we were given every kind of punishment. The food was very bad. Once the pea soup we got was full of worms. It was especially bad in summer as the cabbages and meat were rotten and the bread all mouldy."

The workers lived in barrack-type dormitories that were owned by the capitalists. Each family could rent just a corner of a room where a bed could be put up. The rooms were damp, dark and stuffy. Food was bought from the shop that was also the property of the factory owner. It could be bought "on tick." When pay-day came round the tired workers, black from dust and soot, stood in line for hours as the clerks counted up how much pay was due. When the worker finally reached the pay desk he would see that after he paid the fines, rent and the money he owed the factory shop there was nothing left of his pay. Under

capitalism millions were doomed to slave labour, hunger and poverty.

23.

THE CONDITION OF THE OTHER NATIONALITIES

The Russian Empire was vast. The tsar, the landowners, and the capitalists owned untold wealth. The land, forests, mines, factories, coal and oil, furs and gold belonged to them.

Many different nationalities inhabited Russia. The peoples who lived in Transcaucasia and Central Asia have a long history. Cities like Yerevan, Tbilisi, Samarkand and Bokhara were founded more than two thousand years ago. Even in ancient times these peoples had highly developed cultures. Thus, the great Tajik mathematician, astronomer, physician and poet ibn-Sina, who is better known in Europe as Avicenna, lived more than a thousand years ago. His works have been translated into many European and Asiatic languages. *The Hero in the Tiger Skin*, a poem which the great Georgian poet Shot'ha Rust'haveli composed nearly 900 years ago, is read with admiration to this day by millions inside and outside the Soviet Union. In his beautiful verses the poet extols patriotism, friendship, loyalty and courage and other virtues.

However, the people who lived in the north, in Siberia and the Far East had never seen any metal articles before the Russians came. All their weapons and implements, knives, bows, arrows and needles, were made of stone, bone or wood. The Russian peasants taught them to cultivate the land and breed cattle, and to use guns instead of bow and arrows. Then the mining of iron, gold



The artist Vasili Surikov.

and other minerals began and towns grew up. The working class had emerged. In their work and struggle against their common enemies the working people of different nationalities became friends.

The multinational Russian state was built up over several centuries. Some nations voluntarily joined Russia, others were conquered by force. However, many of them were saved by joining Russia from the devastating attacks of foreign invaders. The Ukrainian people were saved from enslavement by the Polish gentry when their country joined Russia. By uniting with Russia the Transcaucasian peoples were protected from the rav-

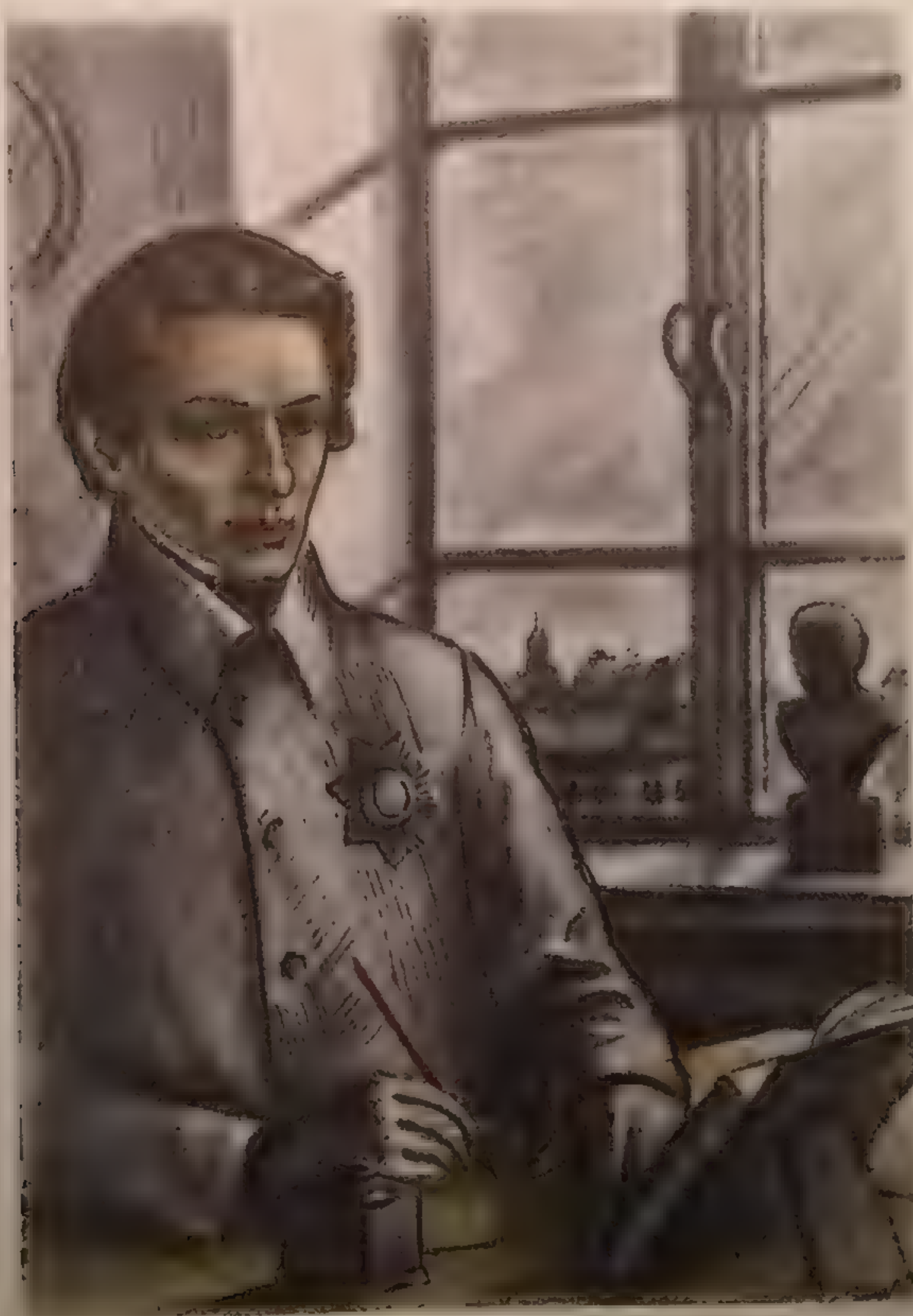
ages of the Turkish and Persian invaders.

As capitalism developed more factories and railways were built. Railways were laid not only westward but also to the Caucasus, Central Asia and Siberia. People living at the country's outskirts where there were few factories were now able to buy things made in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev and Riga. People of different nationalities learned a great deal from one another. The books of the great Russian writers and the works of progressive scholars and scientists could now be obtained by all educated people inhabiting Russia.

But the non-Russian peoples of the Russian Empire had a very hard time. No wonder Lenin called Russia a prison of peoples. The Caucasus, Central Asia and other outlying districts were governed by Russian officials appointed by the Tsar. They scornfully termed all non-Russians "aliens" and cruelly punished all who refused to obey them.

The tsarist government and the ca-

pitalists and landowners of Russia robbed the peoples living in outlying districts of their wealth. They grabbed the best land and took away the iron and copper, oil and cotton, gold and furs. In the Transcaucasia, Central Asia and Kazakhstan very few factories were built, as the Russian capitalists found it more profitable to bring in expensive manufactured goods and take out the cheap raw



The mathematician Nikolai Lobachevsky.

materials. There were also very few schools. The pupils were mostly children of rich parents. The tsarist authorities found it to their advantage to keep the people ignorant and superstitious.

These non-Russian peoples also had their own rich capitalists and landowners, who acted hand in glove with the tsarist government and its officials. With their help the tsarist authorities made trouble between the different national groups and nationalities. Meanwhile the church set people of different faiths and nationalities against each other. In Baku a four-day battle once took place between Azerbaijanians and Armenians, with shooting, houses and shops burnt down, and numerous casualties. While it was going on the tsarist police continued to patrol their beats as if nothing was happening at all. It was to the Tsar's advantage to have people fight amongst themselves. He was afraid along with the landowners and clergy that the working people of different nationalities would unite. They did their best to make the workers quarrel among themselves but they were not always successful.

Time and again Russian and non-Russian peasants and artisans joined forces to fight against their common enemies. Remember the uprisings led by Stepan Razin and Yemelyan Pugachyov who commanded forces made up of Russian, Tartar, Bashkir, Chuvash and Mordvinian peasants.

The workers and peasants of different nationalities who lived in the Russian Empire had common enemies. These were the Tsar, and their "own" and Russian landowners and capitalists. When the Russian workers and peasants rose up against their oppressors, the working people of all

nationalities in Russia fought shoulder to shoulder with them for their common cause.

24.

WORKER-REVOLUTIONARIES

When Russia turned capitalist, a new class, the working class, was formed. The workers worked side by side with one another at the factories owned by the capitalists and lived together in the same neighbourhoods. In this respect they differed from the peasants, who worked each man for himself on his own scrap of land.

Another difference was that while the peasants had some property of their own, such as a tiny plot of land, a few animals and various simple farming implements such as a plough, harrow and scythe, the workers had no property of their own and lived only on what they earned at the factory. The number of workers grew, as more and more peasants were ruined and came to the cities and towns looking for work.

The workers began to struggle against their oppressors. They were led by the boldest and bravest of them. These were worker-revolutionaries. One of the first was Pyotr Alexeyev.

Pyotr was born into a poor peasant family before the end of serfdom in 1861. At the age of ten, his father apprenticed him to work in a factory in St. Petersburg. The boyhood of this future revolutionary consisted of 16-17 hours of work every day as well as abuse and cuffs from the foremen. Only when he grew up did he learn to read and write. Though dead tired after the long working day, he would sit down to his books the mo-

ment he got home, looking for answers to such questions as: Why is life so unfair? Why do some who do not work at all lead a life of ease and luxury, while others who break their backs slaving away, are poor and have no rights at all?

Soon the young worker made the acquaintance of several student-revolutionaries from whom he borrowed revolutionary books that were banned by the tsarist authorities. At the factory where he worked he organized a secret group of workers who wanted to know why things were so unfair

and what should be done to change this way of things. One day, at one such secret meeting of revolutionaries, Pyotr was arrested by the police.

He spent two years in prison before he was brought to trial. He decided that at the trial he would not defend himself but accuse the tsarist government and the capitalists. "I'm a worker," he said to himself, "and as a worker I must speak out about everything the worker feels. I must shout out to all of Russia that the working class is awakening!"

Finally the trial of fifty revolutiona-

The chemist Dmitry Mendeleev.



ries, one of whom was Pyotr Alexeyev, began in St. Petersburg. In the courtroom the high-ranking officers and officials in their gold-frogged uniforms sat down below, while the common people in their shabby clothes sat up in the gallery.

It was the eighteenth day of the trial. The procurator, the defence counsels and the witnesses had all had their say and now it was time for the defendants in the dock, who were guarded by police with bare swords in their hands, to speak. "Defendant Pyotr Alexeyev," the judge announced, "you may now make your last plea." A young, broad-shouldered man of medium height rose. Dark hair framed his pale, heavily bearded face. He had a firm, determined look. Alexeyev spoke of the condition of the workers, who had no one to turn to for help. They could rely only on themselves, he said. The judge tried to interrupt him but he paid no attention, and shaking his fist at the portrait of the Tsar, he loudly exclaimed: "The muscular arm of the working millions will be lifted, and the yoke of despotism guarded by the soldiers' bayonets, will be smashed to pieces!"

This speech was reprinted in many copies in an underground printing-shop and soon became known all over the country. Lenin called it "the great prophecy of the Russian worker-revolutionary."

This was for the first time in Russia that a workingman had dared to speak out so loudly calling his brother-workers to fight. As what Alexeyev did and said was so dangerous to the government, the court gave him the harsh sentence of ten years hard labour. Then exile. Alexeyev died while in exile. Other worker-revolu-

tionaries, more and more of them, took his place. The working class got ready to fight. A few years later the largest strike that had ever happened in Russia broke out.

The Morozov Strike

The day of January 7, 1885 began at the millionaire Morozov's textile mill, in Orekhovo-Zuyevo, like any other day, with workers reporting for work at 5 a.m. Suddenly the factory hooter blew loud and long, drowning out the noise of the looms. The entire mill was plunged into darkness. Shouts of "Down tools!" could be heard as hundreds of feet clattered down the iron stairs.

The crowd that gathered in the mill grounds outside was full of happy faces. This was the first time in many long years that the workers had dared to organize against their rich owner who for so long had tormented them with back-breaking work and fines. Thus began the biggest strike Russia ever had.

It had been organized by the worker Pyotr Moiseyenko. It had not been easy, though, for him to get the workers to organize and struggle for their rights. Many were afraid of the owner and doubted they could achieve anything. The workers met a few times in secret to discuss how best to act.

The workers drew up a list of demands. The most important were to stop the practice of fines and to raise the pay. However, Morozov refused to grant these demands and called for troops who arrived towards evening. When several of the workers were arrested thousands demonstrated in the streets demanding that they be set free at once. The soldiers



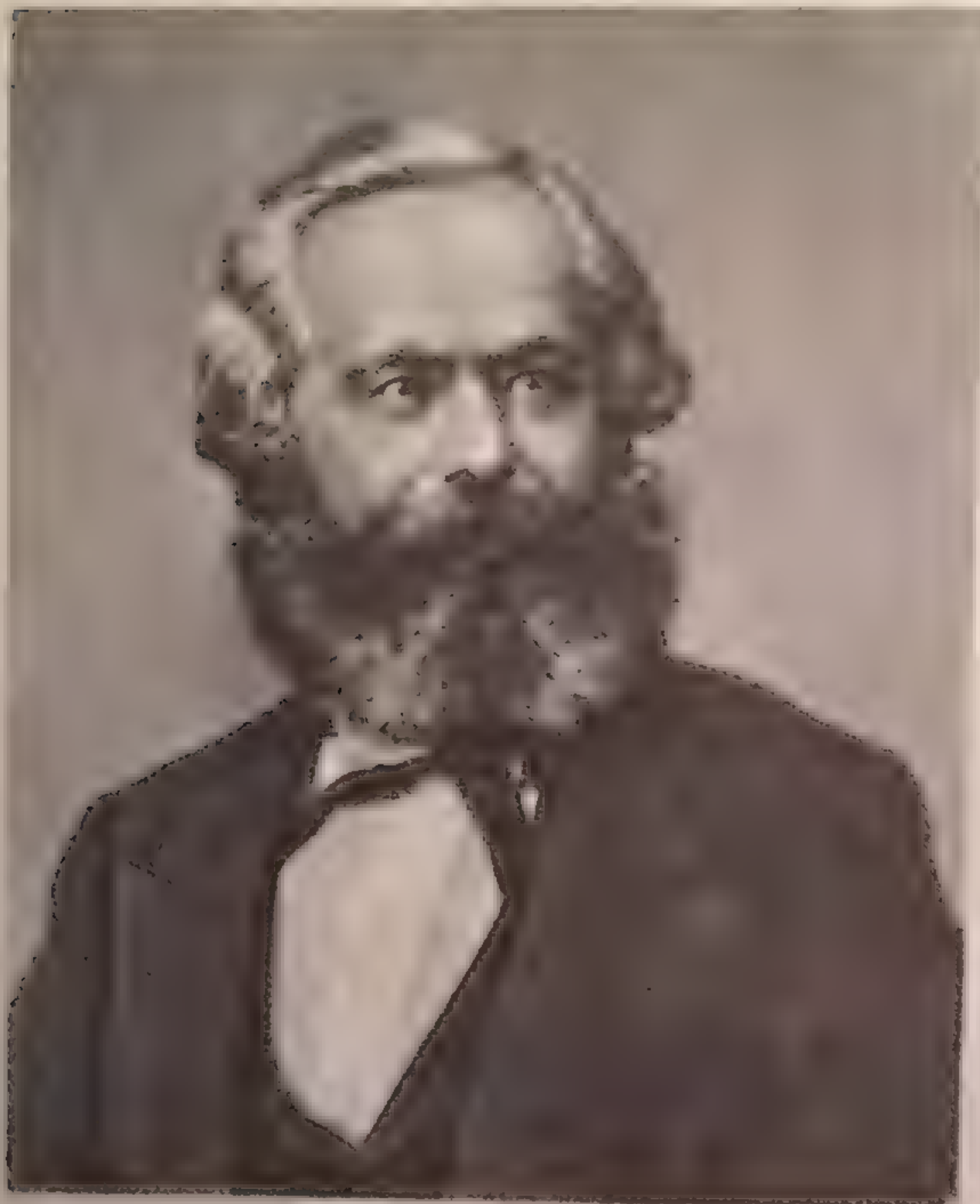
The Morozov factory workers on strike.

surrounded workers' neighbourhoods and a wave of arrests began. About 600 strikers were jailed. One week later the workers returned to work.

Though the strike was put down, the tsarist government, frightened by this organized action of the workers, was compelled to make concessions

and cut down on the system of fines.

But the main lesson learned was that the workers now realized what could be done if they acted together. From now on strikes were more and more frequent. They were held at many factories and mills in various cities and towns.



Karl Marx.

25. VLADIMIR LENIN

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin became the leader and teacher of the working class and the working people of the entire world in their determined struggle against the capitalist system.

Lenin, whose real name was Ulyanov, was born on April 22, 1870, in the city of Simbirsk, which has now been renamed Ulyanovsk. He showed his great abilities in early childhood. He studied well at school and graduated with a gold medal. As a boy he began to read a great deal. He was particularly interested in books which

described the hard lives of working people. But he did not learn about this only from books. He saw for himself how people lived in Simbirsk and in the countryside where his family often spent the summer. He also heard about this side of life from his father and elder brother Alexander.

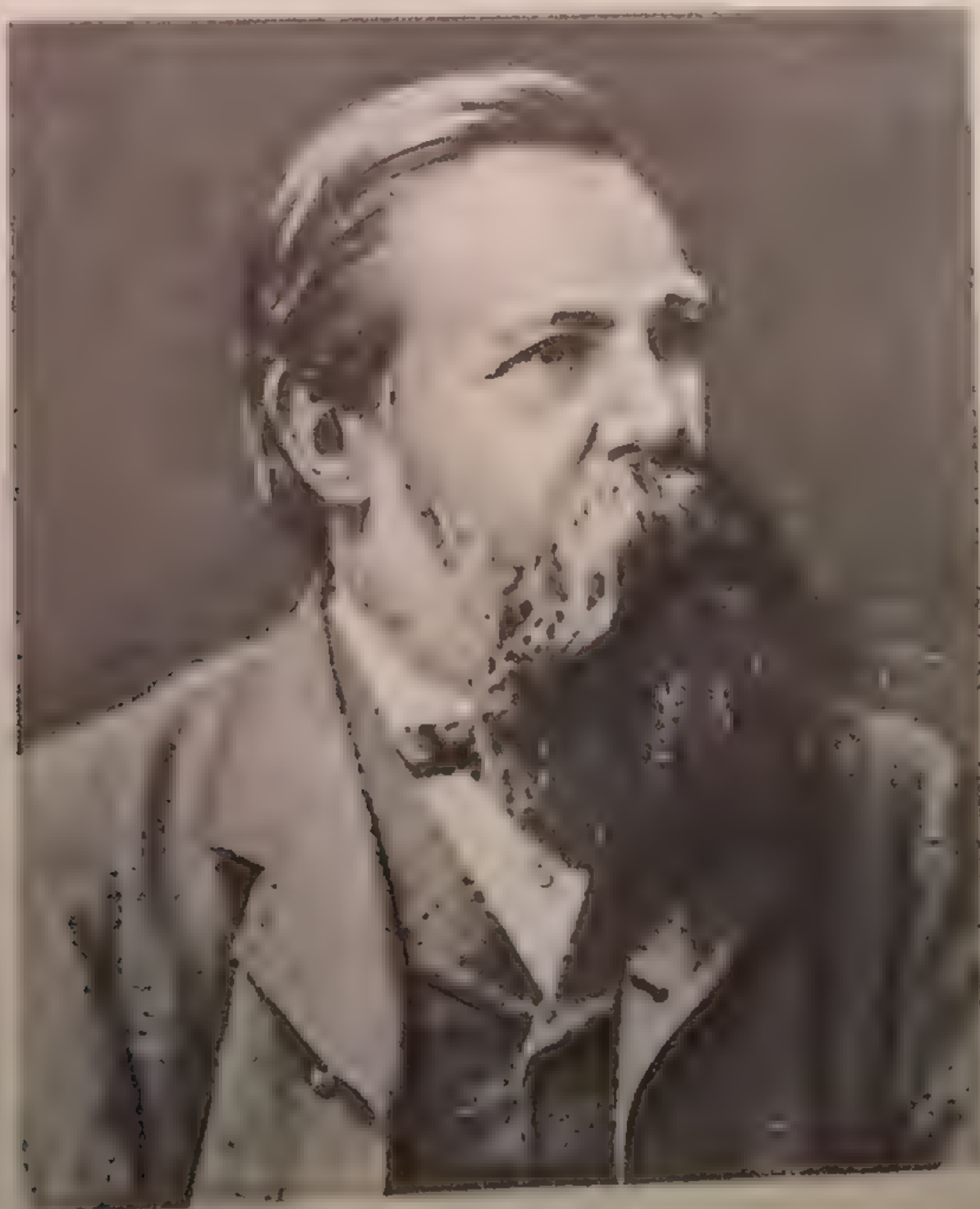
Alexander was a revolutionary. He and his several friends planned to assassinate the Tsar. However, they were found out and Alexander was executed.

When this happened Lenin was only 17. He adored his brother, but he realized that it was hopeless to fight against the Tsar singly, like his

brother and his comrades. It was necessary to get all the working people to take part in this struggle.

As a young man Lenin made a deep study of the writings of the great revolutionaries Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. These two men lived at a time when the capitalist system began to take shape in Western Europe and the USA. The working class tried to struggle for their rights but at the time they did not know whom to fight and how to fight. Marx and Engels worked out the theory on the struggle and victory of the working people of the world. They showed in their works that a proletarian revolution would

do away with the capitalist system. Communism would take the place of capitalism. There would be no oppressed or oppressors in this society because the working people would own all the riches and hold all the power. However, to achieve this, it was necessary to fight a long and hard struggle against the capitalists. In this struggle the working class would be the main force. But to win, they first had to unite. Marx and Engels were the first in the history of mankind to found a communist party, whose members included workingmen from Britain, France, Germany and several other countries. This took place in the middle of the 19th cen-



Friedrich Engels.



Vladimir Lenin.

tury. These two great revolutionaries sent their appeal "Workers of all countries, unite!" all over the world. For more than 100 years now this appeal has been the slogan of Communists.

Lenin carried on the great work of Marx and Engels. He started out as a revolutionary by taking part in student activities at the University of Kazan. For this he was arrested and expelled from the University. "What's the use of rebelling, young man? Don't you see there's a wall before you?" the police officer told Lenin when he was arresting him. "Yes," Lenin said, "but the wall is rotten. Give it a good push and it will topple over!" By this

rotten wall Lenin meant the tsarist system which should be toppled by the power of the working people.

Lenin Joins a Workers' Circle

The place is a neat and tidy room in a house on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. In the middle of the room stands a table covered with a white cloth. The curtains have been drawn tight, for an illegal workers' circle is meeting. Among the people present is the man who lives in the room, the worker-revolutionary Ivan Babushkin. There is a knock on the door and a young man enters. This is Lenin who has come to talk to the group of workers.

Two hours went by unnoticed. In a simple, clear way Lenin explained to the workers how they should struggle against the capitalists. He gave them special sheets of paper on which he had set down tasks for them. The workers were to answer such questions as: How many days in the year do you work? How much do the workers of different trades earn? How much does the capitalist make on fines? And so on and so forth. In this fashion he

taught the workers to look more closely at factory life, and also how to talk to their mates. Lenin and the circle of workers also wrote leaflets calling on the working people to struggle for their rights. One such leaflet read:

"What are we to do, comrades? To whom are we to look for help? Who is to defend us? We have only ourselves to help and defend us. Taken separately, each of us is nothing, but all of us together repre-

Lenin at a workers' circle.



sent a great force. So may everyone unite with his comrades in the fight for the righteous cause, for a better life."

The number of such workers' circles grew. They were organized in various cities and towns of the multinational Russian Empire, such as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, Tiflis (now Tbilisi), and Kazan, to mention only several.

In December, 1895, the police managed to arrest Lenin. However, even from prison he continued to direct the actions of the workers. He sometimes wrote his letters to them in milk between the lines of the books he had read. He made his "inkpots" of bread. Each time the spy-hole opened in the door of the prison cell, he would eat the "inkpot." In one of his letters he wrote: "Today I had to eat six inkpots." This meant that the warder had often spied on what Lenin was doing.

The tsarist court exiled Lenin for three years to the Siberian village of Shushenskoye. After the exile Lenin went abroad to continue the revolutionary struggle.

26.

LENIN FOUNDS THE COMMUNIST PARTY

"Iskra"

Though there were many workers' circles in Russia, they had little contact with one another. They were in no position to get the workers and peasants of this vast country to fight their oppressors.

Lenin taught the workers that freedom could be won only if the whole working class, all the peasants and all

the working people, no matter what language they spoke, were to fight hard for this freedom. But first of all they had to organize a revolutionary party of their own.

Lenin suggested that this work of organizing a revolutionary party be done with the help of a newspaper. But it was impossible to publish such a revolutionary working class newspaper in Russia because of the police. So Lenin and his comrades-in-arms began to put one out abroad. They called their paper *Iskra* (The Spark) and took for its motto the line "The spark will kindle a flame." As a good friend, adviser, and organizer of the workers, *Iskra* described how the workers lived, worked and struggled in Russia and other countries. It was the only paper to which the workers could write about their needs and desires. It spoke about how important it was for the workers to organize their own party. It also said what this party should be like, so that it could get the people to bring about a revolution.

It was a very difficult job to smuggle copies of the *Iskra* into Russia and then distribute it throughout the country. Often copies, printed on thin tissue paper, were hidden in trunks that had false bottoms. Sometimes copies of the newspaper would be stuffed into water-proof sacks that were then dropped into the sea at special places. Underground revolutionaries would then fish out these sacks, bring them ashore, and secretly distribute the paper. Though anyone who dared distribute or read *Iskra* risked prison sentences this did not stop the workers. *Iskra* was their favourite paper. They would make new copies and circulate them among themselves.

Leninist Revolutionaries

The men and women who smuggled and distributed *Iskra* were brave Leninist revolutionaries. Time and again such men as Ivan Babushkin and Nikolai Bauman fooled the police and smuggled copies into Russia. Bauman was especially daring and clever at this. Besides using trunks with false bottoms he would sometimes wear under his clothes a special vest into which he stuffed copies of the paper. This slim man would suddenly become stout. But he would quickly grow thin again when he reached his destination.

One day Bauman was arrested and put in a prison where a number of other revolutionaries were held. He decided to organize a jail-break. The prisoners spent many days secretly making a long rope-ladder. However, the hardest thing to do was to find an iron hook for this ladder. Bauman had a clever idea. A visitor who was permitted to see him handed him a huge bouquet which had the hook hidden inside. Bauman quickly took the heavy bouquet and carried it back with him to the cell. The jail-break was a success.

Party Congress

Lenin and his *Iskra* comrades planned to hold a congress of representatives from Russia's revolutionary working class organizations. This was the Second Party Congress. The First Congress had been held in Minsk in 1898. It had decided to unite all the revolutionary working class organizations into one single party. However, shortly afterwards, the Central Committee the Congress had elected was arrested.

The Second Party Congress met in London in July, 1903. It had to take place abroad because in Russia revolutionaries were persecuted by the tsarist police.

This Congress discussed and adopted the Party's first programme. This programme defined the main aims of the Party. It was necessary to unite the Russian working class and get it to lead the entire people in the struggle against their oppressors. It was necessary to overthrow the power of the tsar, the landowners and the capitalists. It was necessary to set up worker and peasant power in order to build socialism.

Only a strong and united Party could lead the workers and peasants to carry out a revolution. That was why Lenin and his followers demanded that each person who joined the Party give all his energies and abilities to the cause of the working class, the cause of the revolution. Each Party member had to take an active part in revolutionary work, and obey all decisions taken by the majority. Without this discipline, Lenin said, the Party would not be a united, fighting organization. But at the Congress the delegates divided into two groups. One group supported Lenin, the other was against him.

When it became necessary to elect the Party leadership, the majority voted for Lenin and his supporters. Ever since Lenin and his supporters have been called Bolsheviks, and his Party, the Bolshevik Party. The word "Bolshevik" is from the Russian word "bolshinstvo" which means majority. Later on the Bolshevik Party came to be known as the Communist Party. It was this Communist Party that led

the workers and peasants in the struggle for the revolution. The workers in other countries already had parties of their own, but they did not have such a strong and militant party as the one that Lenin organized in Russia.

27. THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Bloody Sunday

Many workers believed that the capitalists, the police and the ministers, but not the Tsar, were to

"Bloody Sunday".

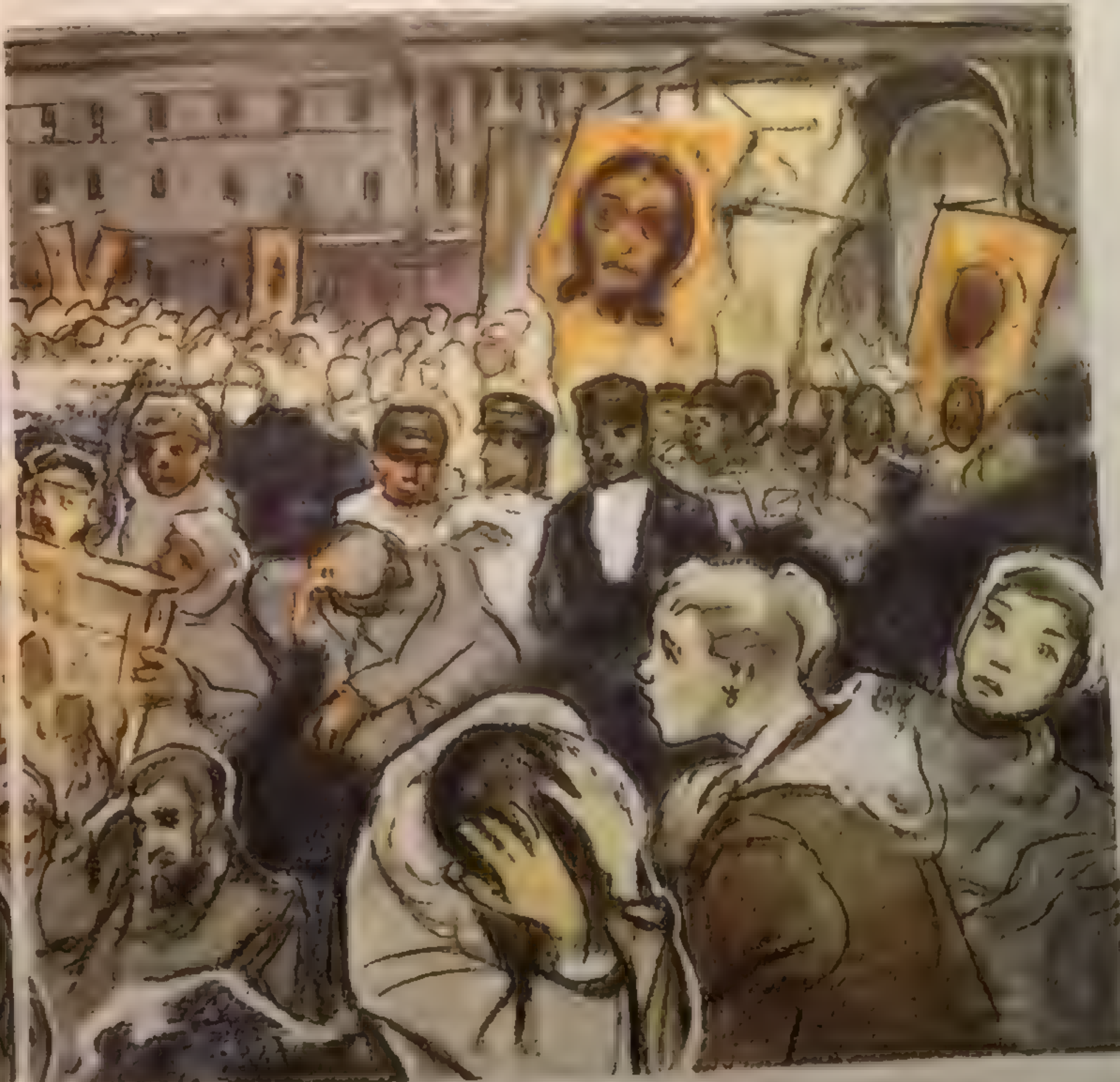


Russia Under the Tsar

blame for the hardships they lived. They still trusted the Tsar and called him Father. They even thought that if the Tsar knew about their hardships he would certainly help them.

At that time a priest by the name

of Gapon was very popular with the workers of St. Petersburg. Actually, he was a secret police agent. Pretending to be a good friend of the workers, he proposed that they write a petition (a letter asking for help) and present it to the Tsar, Nicholas II.



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The workers did that, and decided to give their petition to the Tsar on the Sunday of January 9, 1905.

The Bolsheviks circulated a leaflet among the workers, in which they wrote: "Freedom will never be bought at so cheap a price as one petition alone. Freedom can be won only by armed force. It is not for us to beg the Tsar for anything, or even demand anything from him. It is not for us to humiliate ourselves before our accursed enemy. We must throw him off the throne. Long live the popular uprising! Long live the revolution!"

However, most of the workers continued to trust the Tsar. "Let us go to the Tsar, to the Palace!" they cried.

On the morning of January 9, the workers with their wives and children gathered in the working class neighbourhoods on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. They wore their Sunday best, and many carried icons and portraits of the Tsar. Chanting hymns and prayers, the columns of workers marched toward the Royal Palace. In many of the streets and squares troops and police stood ready for action. The Winter Palace was also roped off. All its windows were tightly shut. The Tsar himself had left the capital, after giving orders to fire on the workers.

A sea of people filled the square in front of the Palace. All eyes turned hopefully towards it. "What will the Tsar tell us?" the workers wondered. In reply shots rang out, and mounted troops with bared sabres charged the crowd. The crowd turned and broke. Many fell, shot or cut down. Groans, curses, and cries of horror filled the air. Such was the Tsar's reply to his trusting subjects. More than a thou-

sand people were killed, and another five thousand were wounded. Small wonder, the people called this day Bloody Sunday.

The workers no longer trusted the Tsar. Their faith was dead. Even those who in the morning had been most eager to see the Tsar now cried "Down with the Tsar!" That same evening the workers began to build barricades in the streets. Bloody Sunday became the beginning of the First Russian Revolution.

The Revolution Takes Fire

Bloody Sunday shocked all of Russia. Strikes broke out in many cities and towns one after another. Even the peasants joined in. For the first time in Russian history the red flag was hoisted on a warship in the summer of 1905. A mutiny had begun aboard the **Potemkin**, a battleship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. The Bolshevik Party called on the people to unite in the struggle against the Tsar and his government.

On October, 1905, a general strike began. Railwaymen in Moscow began it. The Tsar sent his Minister of Railways to Moscow to talk to the strikers. But the railwaymen refused not only to see him, but to even take him back to St. Petersburg. Instead of riding home in his luxurious private coach he had to return in the tender of a locomotive. All the workers of Moscow came out in support of the railwaymen. One after another factories, power stations, banks, post-offices, shops, and horse-drawn trams (the first of which appeared in Moscow in 1899) stopped working.

►
The uprising on the battleship "Potemkin."



Moscow's Bolsheviks appealed to the workers of the entire country: "Comrades, at this great moment every man who is not a senseless stone and who has a real proletarian heart must join in the struggle. Go all out on strike!" And the workingmen of Russia supported their brothers in Moscow. This was a general strike.

The strikers refused to obey the tsarist authorities and elected their own ruling bodies, the Soviets, or councils of workers' deputies. The men and women that they respected and trusted most were elected to these Soviets. Such Soviets were set up in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere. In Moscow the water mains and food shops only worked at the times laid down by the Soviet.

The Tsar sent troops against the strikers, while the police hired gunmen to kill revolutionaries. A fine Bolshevik, Nikolai Bauman, was murdered by a hired thug in Moscow in October 1905. His funeral turned into a vast demonstration. Workers from all of Moscow's factories and mills marched through the streets. In front was the red-draped coffin, behind which came the workers' fighting squads. The stream of people was endless, and there were hundreds of banners and wreaths. After the strains of a funeral march came the singing of revolutionary songs. A speech made at his grave said: "Let us preserve in our hearts the bright memory of this hero. Let us be as brave, bold, and selfless in the fight for the cause of the people as Bauman was!"

Revolutionary rallies and demonstrations took place throughout the country. The workers marched

through the streets, carrying slogans which said: Long live the Revolution!, Down with the Tsar! More fighting squads were organized. The workers planned an armed uprising. In November, 1905, Lenin secretly returned from abroad to Russia to head the revolutionary struggle of the workers.

Armed Uprising

December 1905 came. The revolution caught fire in Russia. However, the general strike and the mass demonstrations had failed to depose the Tsar. The workers took up arms. Armed uprisings broke out in Moscow and several other places.

The bitter fighting in Moscow continued for nine whole days. In the streets the workers, men, women, and teenagers built thousands of barricades. They used anything they could lay their hands on. Several men brought down a wrought-iron telegraph post. Elsewhere men pulled down a fence and gates. Somebody dragged up a shop-signboard. Meanwhile, the women rolled up casks and barrels and carried bits of firewood or filled sacks with sand and stacked them up. Boys and girls tore up cobblestones and tossed them into the barrels or piled them up. When the barricade was ready a red flag was placed on top.

The fighting was particularly fierce in the working class neighbourhood of Presnya. For ten whole days it was completely under the control of a workers' Soviet. The tsarist authorities and police had run away. Workers from the smaller towns around Moscow marched in to help the rebels.

To put down the uprising the tsarist government hastily organized troops and sent troop trains to Moscow.



Barricades in the Presnya District of Moscow, a scene of fierce fighting during the revolution.

In the early morning of December 17 the tsarist troops and police began firing at the barricades with heavy guns. The whole district went up in flames. Soldiers set fire to houses and would not let people take out their things. In a fierce battle the workers fought off the tsarist troops. But although they shot with great accuracy, hunting guns and revolvers were not enough to deal with heavy guns, and cobblestones could not knock out machine-guns. Heavy guns shelled the streets, setting fire

to houses and barricades. The Moscow Soviet decided to end the armed uprising.

In small groups the workers left the Presnya. Despite heavy fire, the engine-driver, Alexei Ukhtomsky, was able to get a workers' fighting squad out of the city. But he, himself, was captured and killed. Hundreds of others were killed, jailed, and sent to do hard labour.

Though the uprising in Moscow was crushed, the revolution continued. Led by the Bolsheviks, the

workers went on fighting in the Ukraine, the Baltic area, the Caucasus, and other areas in multinational Russia. In faraway Siberia the uprising was organized by Babushkin and other exiled revolutionaries. However, there, too, it was put down and its leaders were killed.

The first Russian revolution went on for more than two years. However, this time the Tsar, the landowners, and the capitalists were able to hold onto their power, and took cruel reprisals against the revolutionaries. Police spies searched for Lenin, whom they wanted to arrest. At the end of 1907 he was forced to leave Russia. He crossed the border over the thin ice of the Gulf of Finland. In one place the ice cracked, and Lenin almost lost his life.

The revolution ended in defeat. This happened because the workers and peasants did not always act in an organized way. Though the peasants seized the landed estates they were still not prepared to rise up against the Tsar. Nor did the army support the workers. Most of the soldiers remained loyal to the government. Many of them were former peasants who still had faith in the Tsar. Finally, the workers themselves did not always act together and with enough determination.

The revolution showed that it was necessary for the entire working class to unite and take decisive action to defeat the Tsar, the landowners and the capitalists. What was needed was a firm alliance between the workers and peasants that would be led by the Bolshevik Party.

The Bolshevik Party directed the movement of the workers and peasants in multinational Russia. The Bolsheviks fought selflessly for the

people's interests. They took on the most dangerous jobs.

The first Russian revolution taught the workers a great deal. It prepared them for new revolutionary battles.

28.

THE PEOPLE OVERTHROW THE TSAR

The Bolsheviks Carry On the Fight

After the defeat of the first Russian revolution the Bolsheviks continued the revolutionary struggle. They used all their skill and energy to prepare the working class for new revolutionary battles. Lenin directed the Bolshevik Party from abroad. Neither executions nor reprisals by the tsarist government could stop the revolutionary movement.

The revolutionaries had to carry on the fight in very difficult conditions. Members of the underground Bolshevik movement had no permanent place of residence. They went under aliases, and had to move from place to place. Every minute they were in danger of arrest and jail. The Bolshevik guard was steeled in these grim trials.

One loyal Bolshevik and Leninist was Felix Dzerzhinsky, who became a revolutionary when he was a very young man. He spent eleven years, nearly a quarter of his life, in prisons and doing hard labour. In 1905, he directed the working class struggle in Poland. (Most of Poland had been joined to the Russian Empire in the late 18th century.)

After the defeat of the revolution Dzerzhinsky was arrested. He spent eighteen months in solitary confinement in one of Russia's worst prisons. "This is the fifth New Year that I am spending inside prison," he



The people dethroned the tsar.

noted in his diary. "It is often very hard, even horrible here. But if I were to start life all over again, I would start it in the same way." Despite hard labour and exile, he remained firmly devoted to the cause of the revolution. He always had an encouraging word for his comrades, helped them whenever he could, and often saved them from death. When one of the exiles was threatened with execution, Dzerzhinsky at once gave him the false passport and money he had got hold of to escape himself. Nevertheless, he escaped, without papers or money, and continued to work for the revolution.

"Comrade Arseny" was the alias of the young Bolshevik Mikhail Frunze, who was very popular with the workers of Ivanovo, Shuya, and Vladimir. He took part in the armed uprising and was arrested after it was defeated.

A tsarist court sentenced him to death. But even in the death-cell he did not lose heart. He went on studying English and Italian. His courage amazed even the prison warders. The protests of the workers made the court change his death sentence to six years of hard labour. Even there he continued to work for the revolution.

Like him, Mikhail Kalinin, Sergei Kirov, Sergo Ordjonikidze, Yakov Sverdlov, Joseph Stalin, Stepan Shaumyan, and many other Bolsheviks fought for the working class cause wherever they were, deep in hiding, in prison dungeons, doing hard labour, in exile, or abroad.

The February Revolution

The First World War broke out in 1914. It was a war between the leading capitalist countries, Germany and

its allies, on one side, and Britain, France, and Russia, on the other. They each wanted to seize the land and wealth of others. There has never been such a big and terrible war. Little by little, dozens of countries, including the USA and Japan, were drawn into it. Huge armies with millions of soldiers fought on many different fronts. The governments of the countries at war used new weapons such as warplanes, tanks, and submarines.

The war was a great tragedy for the people. Workers and peasants were drafted into the army. Millions of soldiers were killed in action. Industry, transport, and agriculture declined. A famine began. Meanwhile, the capitalists, the landowners, and the kulaks grew rich. The tsarist government bought weapons, coats, and boots from factory-owners, and food from landowners and kulaks. Incompetent tsarist generals lost battle after battle. More and more workers and peasants lost their lives in a war they did not want.

The people no longer wanted to shed their blood for the rich. The Bolsheviks organized a bold campaign at the front and in the rear. They urged the soldiers to turn their guns against the Tsar, and the workers to go on strike. A second revolution began in Russia. By the end of February 1917 all the workers of Petrograd (as St. Petersburg was called after 1914) were out on strike. It was begun by the workers of the Putilov plant. In response to the call of the Bolsheviks the workers of other Petrograd factories also went on strike. The streets were full of strikers who were joined by thousands of women-workers.

The Bolshevik Committee met late at night in a small house on the outskirts. "We can no longer wait and do nothing. The time has come to act openly. We shall begin tomorrow. We must seize the arms stores and disarm the police," the Committee decided.

The entire capital was ready for action. And again, as in 1905, the Tsar sent troops against the workers. However, this time the soldiers did not fire on the people. The Army began to go over to the side of the revolutionaries. First to join the rebels was the Volynsky Regiment. This happened on the morning of February 27. When one of the officers entered the barracks to greet the men, they responded with a rousing "hurrah!" instead of the usual regulation reply. In a furious rage the officer attempted to make the men obey him, but they poured out of the barracks, where they were joined by the men of other regiments. They marched towards the centre of the city. Meanwhile columns of armed workers, carrying red flags and placards saying "Down with the Tsar!" and "Down with war!" crossed the Neva River. As they marched across the bridges and the ice-bound river they sang:

Toilers and moilers of every nation,
Join the red banner, your only salvation,
The international cause of the workers,
Wrestling the power from idlers and shirkers.

Onward and steady,
Staunch, brave and ready,
Workers unite
For freedom's big fight.

The tsarist cabinet held a non-stop meeting. The ministers listened with terror to the firing in the streets. Suddenly the lights went out. When they went on again some of the ministers could be seen hiding under the table.

By the evening of February 27 the people were in full control of the situation in Petrograd. The prisons and police stations had been smashed and the arms stores captured. Meetings and rallies took place everywhere. The workers and soldiers organized Soviets in which they could express their wishes. The Tsar moved troops from the front lines against Petrograd, but they also sided with the rebel workers and soldiers. The Tsar and his family were arrested. The tsarist system collapsed like a rotten wall.

The second Russian revolution won victory in a few days. However, the bourgeoisie seized power and set up a Provisional Government.

THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE CIVIL WAR

29.

BOLSHEVIKS PREPARE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

In the evening of April 3, 1917 workers in Petrograd welcomed Lenin home. He was coming home after having to live abroad for ten years. Singing revolutionary songs columns of workers, soldiers and sailors marched down the city's broad avenues towards the Finland Railway Station. Red flags waved proudly in the wind. Though the square in front of the station was already packed, more and more people kept coming. Then two armoured cars drove into the square, the long awaited steam engine whistle was heard and the train slowly drew up to the platform.

A few minutes later Lenin came out onto the square to be welcomed by a rousing "Hurrah!" The workers lifted Lenin onto the top of one of the armoured cars. He made a short speech which he ended exclaiming: "Long live the socialist revolution!"

Only one month had passed since the February Revolution. Many still trusted the Provisional Government and hoped it would do something for the people, that it would give the peasants land and end the famine and the war. However, the Provisional Government defended the interests of the landowners and capitalists. It did nothing and did not want to do anything for the people. The terrible war continued and the people starved. The landowners still had the land, the capitalists, the factories and mills. Nothing had changed either for the other national groups and nationalities dwelling in Russia. The Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Uzbeks and other peoples were still oppress-



Lenin's arrival in Petro-
grad.



Lenin hiding in Razliv near Petrograd in 1917.

ed as before by the Russian and their own rich classes.

Only a government of the workers and peasants themselves could meet all the requirements of the people. But to set up such a government, it was necessary first to bring about a socialist revolution. The Bolsheviks carried on propaganda at working class rallies and among the soldiers. In their newspapers and leaflets they told the workers, soldiers and peasants to put no trust in the Provisional Government, to take power into their own hands, to take away the land from the landowners, and to stop the war at once.

In Bolshevik newspapers Lenin explained to the workers, soldiers and

peasants what they had to do to make the socialist revolution victorious. He also often spoke to the workers and soldiers, gathering large audiences. One worker who had been at many meetings and had heard all kind of people speak said he had never heard such a fine speaker as Lenin before. "What he said," this worker said, "brought people together and showed each worker what he should do and how he should do it." The Bolshevik Party grew stronger every day. After six months it had ten times more members.

The Provisional Government looked upon Lenin as its most dangerous enemy. It gave orders to have him arrested. There were even secret in-

structions to kill him. However, the Bolshevik Party did everything it could to protect their leader. Again Lenin had to go into hiding as he did during tsarist times. He lived and worked on the shore of Lake Razliv not far away from Petrograd. He lived in a hut. Nearby was a haystack where Lenin slept when nights were cold. Outside the hut was a small clearing where there were two tree stumps which he used as a "desk" and "chair." Lenin jokingly called this clearing his "green study."

Though he lived on the deserted shore of this lake he was not at all cut off from the workers and the Communist Party. Every day loyal comrades brought Lenin fresh newspapers from Petrograd and letters from his comrades. Sometimes comrades from the Central Committee of the Communist Party, dressed like vacationers, came.

In August the Central Committee of the Party decided that Lenin should go to Finland, as it was now too dangerous for him to hide near Petrograd any longer. From Finland Lenin continued to direct the preparations for the socialist revolution. On his instructions Red Guard detachments were formed at the factories. The more politically conscious and loyal revolutionaries among the workers joined these detachments. Lenin considered it very important to pick the proper commanders for the Red Guards who not only had to be very good in using fire-arms but also had to know how to organize street fighting.

The Bolsheviks carried on a great amount of propaganda work in the army. The soldiers and sailors were sick and tired of the war. Under the influence of the Bolsheviks they

chased away the officers they hated and chose Bolsheviks for their new commanders. More and more soldiers and sailors went over to the side of the Bolsheviks.

At the call of the Bolshevik Party the peasants began to seize the landed estates. Nearly all factory workers in Russia went on strike demanding, "All power to the Soviets! Bread and Peace!" Together with the Russian workers and peasants the working people of the oppressed nationalities of Russia also rose up to fight for their liberation. The day of the socialist revolution drew nearer.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party decided in early October that Lenin should secretly return to Petrograd. As it was too dangerous for him to ride in a coach he travelled in the tender of a locomotive. Several days after his return the Central Committee met and decided to carry out Lenin's proposal to start an armed uprising in the next few days. The workers, peasants and soldiers were ready to follow the Bolsheviks and fight to overthrow the Provisional Government and set up Soviet power.

30. THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Smolny, Headquarters of the Revolution

Smolny¹, which was the offices of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, became the headquarters of the uprising. It was here that Lenin with a loyal Bolshevik comrade

¹ Smolny — a former college for young noblewomen.



The storming of the Winter Palace.

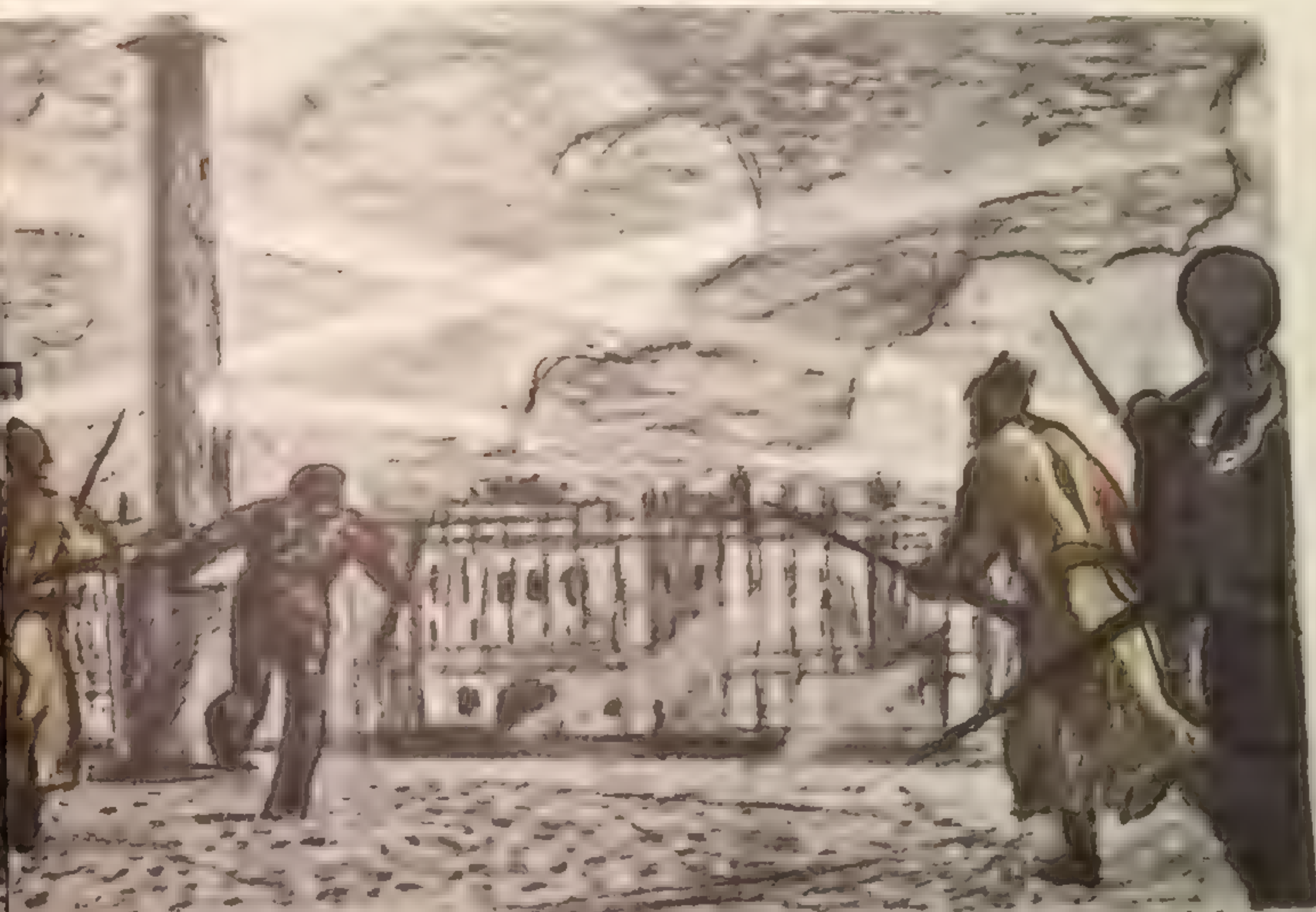
went in the evening of October 24 from his undercover flat. They got on a tram, but as it was going back to its depot, they had to walk the rest of the way along the dark streets. The passers-by never dreamt that the little man coming toward them in a plain worker's cap was the leader of the Great Socialist Revolution that had already begun.

Meanwhile, detachments of Red Guards, soldiers and sailors marched up to Smolny. In the square in front stood cars, motor bicycles and armoured cars and saddled horses. Bonfires and torches blazed. Never before had there been so many

people in the rooms and corridors of Smolny. There was a continual hum of voices and clanking of weapons. Precise military commands rang out. Among the Bolsheviks at Smolny were Dzerzhinsky, Sverdlov, Stalin and Podvoisky.

The moment Lenin arrived at Smolny, he took the leadership of the armed uprising into his hands and led it to victory.

According to the plan Lenin and his closest comrades had worked out the first thing that had to be done was to capture the bridges across the Neva River. These were draw-bridges that could be lifted, which meant



that the Provisional Government could cut off downtown Petrograd from the working class suburbs. The rebels gained full control of these bridges by the evening of October 24. It was also extremely important to capture the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, railway stations and the power plants and to hold on to them at all costs. For if these key points were in the hands of the rebel workers and soldiers, the Provisional Government in the Winter Palace would find itself cut off from the rest of the country and would not be able to call troops to its help. Even in Petrograd it would be

unable to issue orders, if the telegraph office and telephone exchange were in the hands of the rebels.

Singing revolutionary songs, detachments of revolutionary soldiers, workers and sailors marched into the city. By the evening of October 25 the whole city was in the hands of the rebels. Only the Winter Palace still remained in the hands of the Provisional Government.

The Winter Palace Is Taken

The Provisional Government had well fortified the Winter Palace. Its



The storming of the Winter Palace.

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The Winter Palace Is Taken

The Provisional Government had well fortified the Winter Palace. Its

broad corridors, vast rooms, and marble staircases were held by detachments of officers and cadets loyal to the bourgeoisie. They had also built barriers in the square in front of the Palace. However, nothing now could save the Provisional Government. More and more detachments of soldiers and sailors surrounded the Winter Palace from every quarter. The Cruiser **Aurora** went up the Neva River and trained its big guns on the Palace.

At 20 minutes to ten in the evening of October 25 the **Aurora** fired the shot that was the signal for the storming of the Winter Palace to begin. In the face of machine-gun fire the Red Guards rushed across the broad square and broke through the fortifications in front of the Palace gates. For a few moments they were stopped by the heavy wrought-iron gates, but they soon opened them and poured into the Palace. The officers inside continued to resist, firing from the top of the stairs and from behind the columns and marble statues.

But the Red Guards and sailors continued to press forward until at last they reached the room where there were several frightened men, the ministers of the Provisional Government. At 10 minutes past two in the early hours of the morning, the bourgeois Provisional Government was arrested and the workers and peasants took power into their own hands. The Socialist Revolution had won!

October 25, 1917, which is November 7 according to the new calendar, has gone down in history as the day on which the Great October Socialist Revolution won.

All Power to the Soviets! Land to the Peasants! Peace to the Peoples!

In the evening of October 25, when shots were still being fired outside and inside the Winter Palace, the Second Congress of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies opened in Smolny's huge meeting hall. The delegates of the working people had come to this Congress from all over the country, from the cities, towns and villages and also from the front. They were full of enthusiasm. When they were told that the Winter Palace had been taken and the Provisional Government arrested they burst into applause. The Congress proclaimed Soviet power—the power of the workers and peasants.

The Congress opened its second session at nine o'clock in the evening of October 26. Applause, cheers and shouts of joy greeted Lenin as he rose to speak. Hats were tossed into the air and people climbed onto the window sills and chairs in order to see him.

As Lenin lifted his hand there was a hush. The delegates drank in every word. He spoke of what meant so much to all the working people—peace. They had waited three long terrible years for peace. But it was only this new power, the power of the workers and peasants, that on the very first day it took over wanted to establish peace. The Congress passed the Decree on Peace (all the first laws that Soviet power passed were known as decrees).

Then Lenin read out the Decree on Land. From now on all the estates of the landowners, the Tsar and the church were made the property of the Soviet state and were given to

the peasants. For centuries the peasants had fought for land. And now Soviet power was giving the land freely and for all time to those who worked it.

As morning dawned, the Congress elected the very first Soviet government with Lenin at its head. "Long live the revolution!" "Long live socialism!" the delegates shouted as the Second Congress of Soviets ended.

Soon Soviet power was set up throughout the country. But the new Soviet government had a very difficult situation to deal with at the beginning. There was complete chaos in the country. Many of the factories and railways had stopped working. There was not enough bread. The capitalists shut down their factories, wrecked the machinery and smuggled their money and other valuables abroad. Many of the officials did not want to work for the new government. They either stayed home or made such a muddle of their work that it was very hard for anyone not in the know to understand what to do. The capitalists and bureaucrats thought that Soviet power would not last as it would be impossible to govern this vast country without trained people. However, they were wrong.

Lenin told the working people that it was now their job to govern the state. The workers, sailors and soldiers were eager to help and little by little got the offices, railways, post and telegraph offices and telephone exchanges working again. The Soviet government passed more decrees giving the state control of the factories, banks, railways and mines. All the country's wealth was now in the hands of the workers' and peasants' state. The workers at factories and mills now became their new managers.

The Bolshevik Party sent workers, soldiers and sailors to the countryside to help the peasants take the land away from the landowners.

Soviet power did away with the oppression of national groups. All the people living in Russia received equal rights.

All power and all the riches were now in the hands of the working people. The workers and peasants began to govern the state and build a new life. The age-old dream of the working people had at last come true.

The Great October Socialist Revolution was the first revolution in the world in which the workers and peasants came to power. It showed the workers in every country how to fight for a happy life.

31.

IN THE RING OF FIRE

The landowners and capitalists of Russia could not accept the fact that the people had taken away their power and wealth. During 1917 they tried several times to overthrow the new Soviet rule but failed. Then they formed their own army, the White Guards, and started a war against the workers' and peasants' state. A Civil War began. The capitalist states came to the help of the White Guards and sent their armies against the Soviet republic.

The Red Army Is Formed

In February, 1918, the German army attacked Soviet Russia. This army was well equipped and commanded by experienced generals and officers. Meanwhile, the young Soviet republic had few experienced commanders. The men of the former tsarist army had gone back to their

homes and most of the former generals and officers were enemies of the Soviet state. The Soviet Republic was in real danger. The enemy quickly moved towards starving, freezing Petrograd.

Lenin and the Communist Party called on the workers and peasants to defend all they had won during the October Revolution. At the foot of the tall linden trees in Smolny's old snow-swept park, Red Guards wearing shabby overcoats, army great coats and peajackets crossed with cartridge belts warmed their hands over bonfires. These were the first detachments of the new workers' and peasants' Red Army that was being formed at this dangerous time.

Everywhere volunteers were joining the new army. In an appeal to the workers Bolsheviks said: "The Germans are advancing on Petrograd. We shall not surrender our Red city to the enemy! Rise all to the defence of the revolution!" The new recruits to the Red Army went off to the front as soon as they received guns and rifles. Communists marched in front. As they went along the soldiers of new Red Army sang:

Bravely shall we go into battle
For Soviet power!

The newly formed Red Army was able to stop the German advance on Petrograd. This happened on February 23, 1918, and in honour of this event every year February 23 is marked in the Soviet Union as the Day of the Red Army.

"The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!"

This is what Lenin and the Communist Party said when they asked the people to help during this terrible time. They got the support of all

the working people who rose to defend their socialist Fatherland.

The situation became especially dangerous in the summer of 1918. The Germans had captured the Ukraine and Byelorussia. Anglo-American forces had landed in the North, in Murmansk and Archangel. French troops had occupied Odessa, Sebastopol and other places along the Black Sea coast. Japanese and American troops had seized the Far East. The foreign invaders and White Guards had control of the Crimea, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Siberia. The Soviet Republic was circled by a ring of fire.

However, Lenin and the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party were at their post in Moscow, the heart of our country. In March, 1918, the Soviet government had moved from Petrograd to Moscow, making Moscow the new Soviet capital. Lenin directed the entire life of the country. Dzerzhinsky, Kuibyshev, Stalin, Ordjonikidze and other Bolsheviks were sent to the most difficult sectors of the front.

During these days Lenin worked almost round the clock. He asked Red Army commanders and Party workers for reports and received letters and telegrams from all the fighting fronts and from all over the country. He often spoke to the workers at their factories and groups of Red Army-men before they left for the front. The enemies of the revolution thought this was the moment to try to kill Lenin.

On August 30, 1918, Lenin spoke to the workers of the Michelson plant, now the Vladimir Ilyich plant, in Moscow. The base attempt on Lenin's life was made after the meeting was over when he was walking to-

wards his car with a group of workers.

The news of the attack stunned the country. Every day people waited anxiously for the latest bulletin about his health. The workers and peasants vowed to devote all their strength to fight the enemy. The men of the Red Army wanted to go into battle immediately to take their revenge against the enemies of Soviet power for Lenin's wounds.

In September, 1918, the Red Army liberated Simbirsk, Lenin's birthplace, from the White Guards. Lenin received a telegram which said: "We have taken the town in which you were born. This is our revenge for one of your wounds. We promise to take Samara in revenge for your second wound." And Samara was freed shortly afterwards.

Lenin began to recover and was soon back at work again.

The civil war in the streets of Petrograd.



KOLCHAK IS DEFEATED

The enemies made use of everything they could to destroy Soviet power. Times were very grim. The workers received a daily bread ration of no more than 50-100 grammes. Sometimes instead of bread they were given unground grain. The Red Army was poorly clothed and shod and there were not enough guns. However, the working people stood up to it all. The Red Army beat back the fierce attacks of its many enemies and then went over to the offensive. The Civil War continued for three years and all this time the Soviet people fought heroically against the enemy.

Many different nationalities fought in the Red Army. All the working people of Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Central Asia rose up to fight the White Guards. During the Civil War the workers and peasants became firmly united.

The Civil War brought many fine commanders to the fore. Among them were Mikhail Frunze, Semyon Budyonny, Kliment Voroshilov and Vasili Blyukher, to mention but four. Vasili Chapayev, Nikolai Shchors, Sergei Lazo and other popular heroes won undying fame, giving up their lives in battles for their country and the Revolution.

One of the young Soviet Republic's most dangerous enemies was Admiral Kolchak, who had captured Siberia and the Urals. His large army was well equipped with weapons, clothing and food sent him from capitalists abroad. There was even a curious song about Kolchak which said that this ruler of Omsk, his Siberian "capital," wore a British uniform

with Russian epaulettes and smoked Japanese tobacco.

In the spring of 1919 Kolchak began an offensive in the direction of the Volga River. Lenin sent the brave revolutionary and fine commander, Mikhail Frunze, to direct operations on the most important section of the front against Kolchak. Chapayev's famous division also fought on this front.

Vasili Chapayev

This happened in Nikolayevsk, now Pugachyov, in the autumn of 1917. A man wearing an army tunic walked into the local Bolshevik Party Committee. "Is this where the Bolsheviks are?" he asked. "Yes," he was told. "My name," he said, "is Chapayev and I have come here to join the Party."

At the time Chapayev was 30. The son of a poor carpenter, he had not been able to go to school. He had to work from a very early age. During the First World War he was drafted into the army and sent to the front, where he was decorated for bravery four times with the highest award that was given to men in the ranks. When the Revolution began and the Civil War broke out, Chapayev became one of the most famous commanders in the Red Army.

The Red Army troops commanded by Mikhail Frunze were attacking Ufa. Chapayev's division was the main force on this sector. The enemies wanted to smash it and sent a crack officers' detachment against it. They planned to trap Chapayev and his men with a psychological attack.

In the early morning Chapayev's men were watching the enemy from their trenches. To the roll of drums



Riders from the legendary Chapayev's division.

the White Guards marched into the attack. Wearing black uniforms, with tsarist orders glittering on their chests, they marched forward, with rifles at the ready, as if on parade. The gap between them and the trenches, where Chapayev's men lay, became less and less. But they did not open fire. They wanted to let the enemy get closer so as to get better aim. Finally the order rang out: "Fire!" The first row of officers fell like ninepins, but the White Guards stubbornly continued to advance. Again the order to fire rang out. The White Guards broke, turned and ran. Chapayev and his men dashed out

after them. On his favourite dun mare Chapayev flew forward like a bird, his black cape streaming out behind, as he cut down the enemy with his flashing sword.

The battle ended and on that same day Chapayev forded the Belaya River and entered the city of Ufa. Other Red Army units also went into the attack. The White Guards were crushed and rolled back beyond the Urals.

However, shortly afterwards Chapayev was killed. Badly wounded, he was swimming across the Ural River when he fell victim to a White Guard bullet. His men revenged the death

of their beloved commander. They continued to chase the enemy, who fled leaving their weapons behind.

In Kolchak's rear were many partisan detachments of workers and peasants, who armed with hunting guns, home-made cannon, and weapons captured from the enemy, fought bravely against the White Guards. Together with the Red Army they pursued the enemy without stopping. Kolchak was completely defeated and now that little song about Kolchak which we mentioned earlier had another verse which said that the uniform had been worn to rags, the epaulettes had fallen off, the tobacco had been smoked and the ruler had slunk off.

Siberia became Soviet. Kolchak was captured and a revolutionary court sentenced him to death.

33.

"ALL OUT AGAINST DENIKIN!"

In the summer of 1919, when the Red Army was fighting Kolchak, another White Guard General, Denikin, began to advance across the Ukraine towards Moscow. White Guard cavalry broke through the Soviet front and captured Kursk, Voronezh and Oryol. They approached Tula, where the main arms factories were. White Guard officers were already having themselves outfitted for new dress uniforms for a parade in Moscow. They had begun to prepare for victory too soon.

"All Out Against Denikin!" the Bolshevik Party called. Scores of thousands of workers and peasants joined the Red Army to beat back the enemy offensive. Again Communists and Komsomol members were in the front lines. Partisan units coura-

geously fought in the Ukraine in Denikin's rear. Lenin worked out a plan for the defeat of Denikin. After much hard fighting the Red Army broke through the White Guard front and chased Denikin southwards. In front was the Red Cavalry under the command of Budyonny and Voroshilov.

Oleko Dundic

There were many brave men in Budyonny's cavalry. One of the bravest was Oleko Dundic, a Serb and man of legendary courage.

Budyonny was ordered to take Voronezh, where the White Guard troops of General Shkuro, one of Denikin's top officers, were quartered. It was necessary to confuse the enemy and then attack. Budyonny thought out the following plan. He wrote Shkuro a letter in which he said that as he would be in Voronezh on October 24 he wanted all the White Guard troops paraded on the main square that day. He needed somebody to take this letter to the White Guard general. Dundic volunteered. He dressed up as a White Guard officer and with two other brave men also wearing White Guard uniforms, safely got through the enemy outposts and arrived in Voronezh.

The White Guards had their headquarters in a large house in the centre of the city. Dundic left his companions at the door. His spurs clinking, he went up to the first floor and gave the duty officer a sealed envelope which, he said, must be urgently handed to the general. He clicked his heels, turned and calmly went back down the stairs. The envelope was handed to the General. He

slit it open and began to read. His face turned red as he finally understood what was written. In a furious rage he cried out: "Arrest the man who brought this letter!" Dundic was already going out through the door. Outside his companions waited on horseback. White Guard officers rushed towards Dundic firing their revolvers at him. Dundic calmly mounted his horse and the brave trio dashed off, leaving the pursuing White Guards far behind.

Shortly afterwards he reported to Budyonny that he had carried out his order. Budyonny and his men laughed heartily as they listened to Dundic's story.

On October 24, the day Budyonny had appointed, his cavalry liberated Voronezh in a dashing attack.

Dundic accomplished many more glorious deeds before he was killed towards the close of the Civil War in an attempt to save the life of his comrades.

Hands Off Soviet Russia!

The workers and peasants of Soviet Russia were not alone in their struggle. Their brothers, workers in other countries, came to their help. Serving in the Red Army were Hungarians, Czechs, Serbs, Bulgarians, Germans, Frenchmen, even Chinese and Koreans. The Soviet people had the friendly support of the working people of the entire world. In Europe and America the workers demanded of their governments: "Hands Off Soviet Russia!"

Foreign soldiers refused to fight the Soviet republic. On ships anchored in Sebastopol and Odessa French seamen raised red flags. Brit-

ish workers refused to load ships with arms for the White Guards fighting the Soviet republic. German railwaymen side-tracked waggons with goods for the White Guards. The working people throughout the world helped the Soviet republic in its just struggle. "As soon as the international bourgeoisie raised their hand against us, their own workers grabbed it," Lenin said. Following Soviet Russia's example the working people in many countries organized Communist Parties which led the struggle against those who oppressed them.

34.

"THE GLORY OF THESE YEARS WILL NEVER FADE..."

The Red Army defeated Denikin, then freed the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus. But the Crimea was still occupied by the White Guard General Wrangel while counter-revolutionary Polish forces had begun an offensive in the West. It was 1920.

Grigori Kotovsky

Among the Red Army units fighting the White Guard forces was the cavalry brigade commanded by Grigori Kotovsky. Before the October Revolution Kotovsky was regarded as a modern Robin Hood in Bessarabia which is now the Moldavian Republic. When the Civil War broke out he joined the Communist Party to devote his entire life to the Revolution, the Party and the people.

His brigade took part in the battle to free the Ukraine from the counter-revolutionary Polish forces. In the



Grigori Kotovsky, the celebrated commander of the Civil War days.

fierce fighting his men showed great courage and thanks to the skill of their commander always managed to get out of the most difficult situations.

One day Kotovsky with a small group of scouts found themselves in the midst of a White Guard cavalry regiment. The enemy proposed that he surrender. Kotovsky told his officer-in-charge to drag out the surrender talks while he escaped. Then he returned with his brigade. When an

enemy cavalry man thrust his lance at him Kotovsky adroitly caught it and held it tight. The enemy tried to pull it back. But Kotovsky chopped him down with his sabre. The White Guards fled. Once again Kotovsky saved his men.

The Bolsheviks gained lots of experience and confidence in the battles they fought. Among them was Nikolai Ostrovsky, who was later to write the splendid book "How the Steel Was Tempered."

White Guard Forces Smashed

The Red Army forced the counter-revolutionary Polish troops far back into the West. Now the problem was to defeat General Wrangel and free the Crimea. Mikhail Frunze was appointed to command the Red Army forces assigned this task.

The only way into the Crimea lay across the narrow Perekop Isthmus which the White Guard troops had heavily fortified. Along its entire length of eight kilometres they had dug a deep moat and behind it had thrown up tall ramparts with several rows of barbed wire entanglements.

They had also mounted on these ramparts 70 heavy guns and some 150 machine-guns. From the west General Wrangel was covered by the guns of the warships sailing in the Black Sea. On the eastern side the fortified ramparts ended at the edge of the shallow but marshy Sivash or Rotten Sea, a gulf of the Sea of Azov. The Red Army Command resolved to attack Perekop from both land and the Sivash at the same time.

The attack began on the night of November 7, 1920, the day of the third anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Red Army troops forded the Sivash, dragging

Young Red Army men were steeled in the battles of the Civil War.



behind them heavy guns, machine-guns and ammunition on small rafts. They waded through the water up to their waist. Despite the biting cold wind that often knocked them down and the slippery bottom, they moved ahead. Braving enemy fire Red Army soldiers waded ashore and broke through the barbed wire entanglements. After fierce hand-to-hand fighting the fortifications in the enemy rear were captured.

On that same day other Red Army units braved withering enemy fire to storm the Perekop Isthmus itself. That night the Isthmus was captured and the liberation of the Crimea began. In Sebastopol the remnants of Wrangel's shattered army hastily left by sea. On November 15 the Red Army freed this city and on May 17 completed the liberation of the Crimea. This victory spelled in the main the end of the Civil War—though in the Far East the war against the White Guards and Japanese invaders continued up to 1922.

The workers and peasants of the young Soviet republic won the Civil War and defended Soviet power and their socialist Fatherland. They won because they had been fighting for a good and just cause, for their own freedom. They were led by the Communist Party under Lenin. Workers and peasants of every nationality joined together to fight the enemy. Workers in capitalist countries did their best to help the Soviet people during their struggles.

35.

COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS

During the grim years of the Civil War the working people did their utmost to defend all they had won as

a result of the October Revolution. The Red Army showed great courage at the front while the workers and peasants did everything they could to help.

It was a very hard time—especially in Petrograd and Moscow. Trams could not run and buildings were not heated. To warm their homes Muscovites pulled down and burned old wooden houses and fences. There was a shortage of the most important items such as bread, matches, salt, soap, kerosene, sugar and tea. Because of the fuel crisis factories and trains often had to stop. Typhus was widespread. But despite the chaos and the hardships people did their best to provide the Red Army with arms and food. The Civil War had practically destroyed the railway system. The old locomotives and wagons were no good, but the Soviet Republic was unable to make any new ones.

On the Saturday of April 12, 1919, two Red Army troop trains, headed for the front, pulled in at Moscow's marshalling yards. However, they could not go any further as all the locomotives were out of order. Communist Party members working at the yards decided not to go home until some locomotives had been repaired. All Saturday night 15 Communist Party members worked by the light of torches in an unheated building. Not one word of complaint was heard. By morning they had repaired three locomotives and the troop trains were able to set off for the front.

This was the Soviet Republic's first Communist Subbotnik. Subbotnik is the derivative from "subbota," the Russian word for Saturday. Though tired after a hard day's work,



A Communist Subbotnik: people worked voluntarily without remuneration to help rehabilitate the war-ravaged economy.

these Communists, instead of going home, had worked overtime without pay for their Soviet Homeland. Other workers caught the idea. At the next Subbotnik three times as many people volunteered to work. Soon the movement spread throughout the country. People volunteered because they knew that the future of the Soviet Republic depended on their efforts.

During the Civil War miles upon miles of railway lines were wrecked, quite often due to fighting. To defeat

the enemy smoothly operating railways were needed to bring weapons to the troops at the front, raw material and fuel to the factories, and food to the cities. The railwaymen knew this very well.

At a meeting Ukrainian railwaymen decided: "We will follow the example of our brothers at the front and add two hours to our workday, then donate the money we get to the job of repairing the railways." Railwaymen in many other parts of the country decided to follow suit.

An All-Russia Communist Subbotnik was organized on May Day, 1920. Hundreds of thousands of people worked with enthusiasm. Muscovites cleared streets, filled in holes, and repaired hospitals. Kremlin leaders, among them Lenin, his wife Krupskaya, Kalinin and Dzerzhinsky also lent a hand. Lenin asked the person in charge to tell him what to do and then joined a group stacking up logs. They worked well and willingly to the music of a brass band. But the bandsmen caught the spirit. They put their instruments down and began to

carry bricks. A lot of work was accomplished on that May Day.

The Subbotniks organized during the Civil War were a great help in dealing with the chaos in the rear and also assisted the armies at the front. Subbotniks could only have started in the Soviet country where men and women work for themselves, for the entire people, not for a capitalist boss. They are called Communist Subbotniks because on such days people consciously volunteer to work without pay for the common good.

THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM IN THE USSR

36. FORMATION OF THE USSR

That day Lenin was intently studying a design for the state emblem of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. It depicted a hammer and sickle in the rays of the rising Sun, framed in a wreath of ears of grain. A drawn sword crossed the entire design, from the ribbon at the bottom to the top. Lenin liked the design but wondered why the artist had put a sword in his drawing. "We shall go on fighting," Lenin said, "until we chase out all the White Guards and invaders. But we don't need conquests and so we don't need a sword." With these words he crossed the sword out.

Ever since only symbols of peaceful labour have been depicted on the state emblems of Soviet republics. These emblems are familiar to people throughout the world because they belong to the world's first multinational workers' and peasants' state.

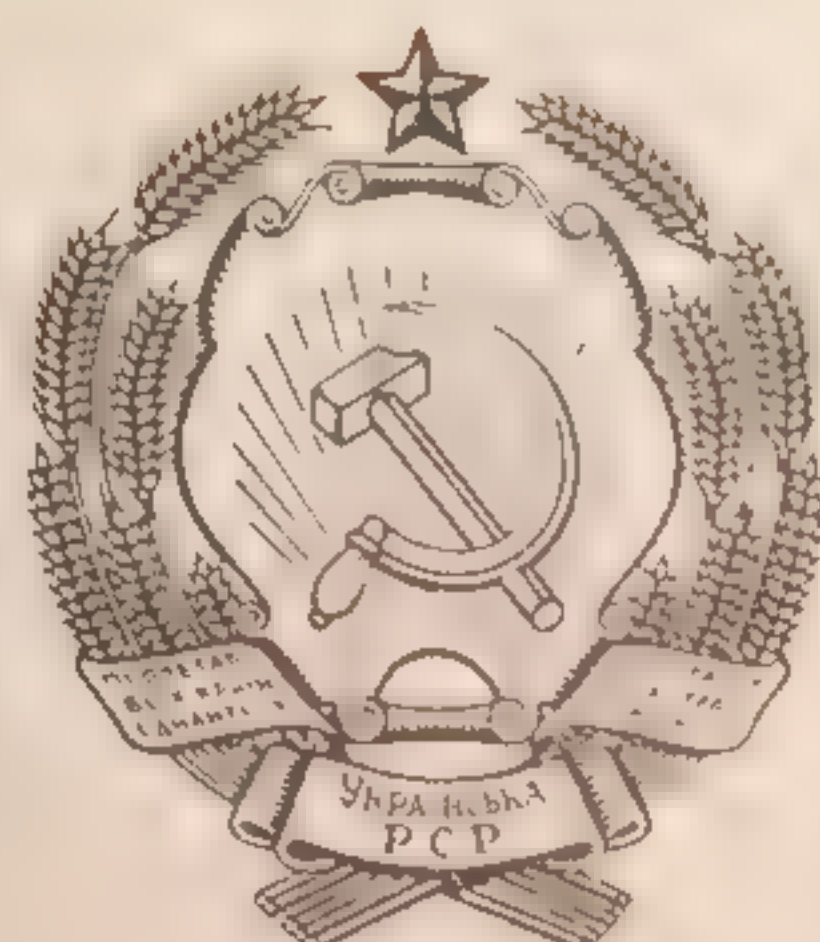
Since ancient times the people of Russia have banded together to fight against their oppressors and against foreign invaders. The Great October Socialist Revolution liberated the oppressed peoples of the former Russian Empire. During the Civil War they fought for Soviet power shoulder to shoulder with the Russian workers and peasants.

Among the Civil War heroes were men of different nationalities. They include two Moldavians, Mikhail Frunze and Sergei Lazo, the Ukrainians, Nikolai Shchors and Alexander Parkhomenko, a Chuvash, Vasili Chapayev, a Lett, Yan Fabricius, a Georgian, Sergo Ordjonikidze, and an Armenian, Stepan Shaumyan.

The emblems of the 15
union republics:



the Russian Federation



the Ukrainian SSR



the Latvian SSR



the Uzbek SSR



the Kazakh SSR

The state emblem of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Re-
publics.



the Byelorussian SSR



the Azerbaijan SSR



the Georgian SSR



the Kirghiz SSR



the Tajik SSR,



the Lithuanian SSR



the Moldavian SSR



the Armenian SSR



the Turkmenian SSR



the Estonian SSR

The emblems of the 15
union republics:



the Russian Federation



the Ukrainian SSR

The state emblem of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Re-
publics.



the Byelorussian SSR



the Azerbaijan SSR



the Lithuanian SSR



the Moldavian SSR



the Latvian SSR



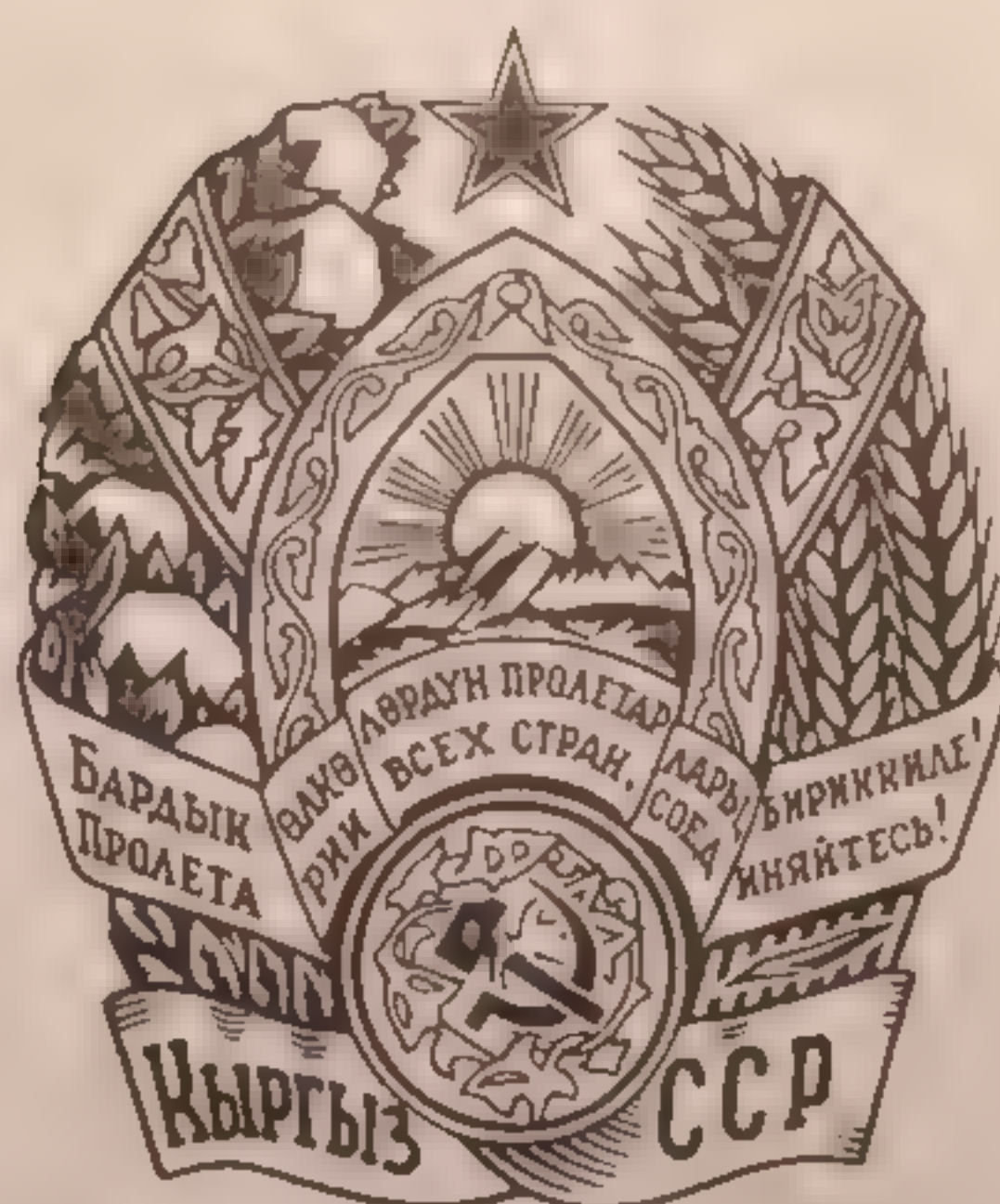
the Uzbek SSR



the Kazakh SSR



the Georgian SSR



the Kirghiz SSR



the Tajik SSR,



the Armenian SSR



the Turkmenian SSR



the Estonian SSR

Several independent Soviet republics were formed during the Civil War. On Lenin's initiative, in December, 1922, they united into one state, that was called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or the USSR. In 1922 it included four republics: the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, which then embraced Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

From all over the country delegates flocked to Moscow for the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR. Although they spoke different languages, such as Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Kazakh, Turkmenian, Uzbek and Kirghiz, they all said the same thing and had the same wish. They must stick together. Alone, it would be much harder to defend themselves. Without each other's help, especially the help of the Russian people, it would be impossible to develop industry and to raise the level of culture.

The life of the peoples of the USSR began to change. Factories, power stations, motor roads, railways, hospitals, schools, colleges and theatres were built in the different Soviet republics and newspapers and books were published in all the languages of the Soviet Union.

The life of the national groups of Northern Russia has completely changed. Before the revolution they had no written language at all. Under Soviet rule schools were opened where instruction was given in their native tongues. Today everyone in the North can read and write. Each national group has its own

school-teachers, doctors, scientists, and writers.

The Soviet republics have very close ties with each other. Kazakhstan mines coal and copper for both its own industry and the entire country. In Vilnius, Moscow, Leningrad and Tbilisi textile mills make fabrics from Uzbek and Tajik cotton. All over the country one finds machine-tools, turbines, tractors and other machines that were made in Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, Chelyabinsk, Kutaisi and elsewhere. Motor vehicles produced in Gorky, Moscow, Riga, or Minsk carry passengers and freight in Central Asia, Siberia, the Baltic republics and Transcaucasia.

The Soviet peoples help one another like brothers. When, in 1966, a disastrous earthquake destroyed a part of Tashkent, other cities among them Moscow, Minsk and Tbilisi at once sent teams of building workers, material and machinery there. New buildings able to withstand even very strong tremors were specially designed. Tashkent children were welcomed by Young Pioneer Camps in the Crimea, the Caucasus, the Ukraine and in the Baltic republics. The help given Tashkent is only one of the many examples showing the brotherly friendship between the Soviet peoples.

Today the USSR is made up of 15 constituent republics. They vary in size and population. The biggest is the Russian Federation, but Estonia, which is 400 times smaller and has a population nearly 100 times less, enjoys the same rights. All the peoples of the USSR govern the state themselves. There are no ruling or ruled national groups and nationalities in the Soviet Union.

The Great October Socialist Revolution brought freedom and equality to the working people of all the nationalities living in this country.

37. LENIN IS DEAD BUT HIS CAUSE LIVES ON!

At the end of 1922 Lenin became very ill. His doctors suggested he move to Gorky not far away from Moscow for treatment and rest. The entire country was worried about his health. Then on January 21, 1924, he grew worse and at 6:50 p.m. he died. Millions of people were overcome with sorrow.

On January 23, a special train brought the dead leader's remains to Moscow. Despite the terrible cold an endless stream of people moved in complete silence towards the House of Trade Unions where Lenin lay in state in the White Hall of Columns. The heavy doors were flung wide open to let the thousands file in to pay their last tribute. In the solemn silence of the ice-cold hall the quiet strains of the funeral march mingled with the shuffling of feet and subdued sobbing. Every five minutes the guard of honour changed. Lenin's relatives, friends and comrades, the Bolshevik Old Guard stood in sorrowful silence, as factory workers, peasants, Red Army soldiers and college and school students passed by in a seemingly endless procession that lasted four whole days and nights.

Then, on the morning of January 27, the remains of the dead leader were brought to the Red Square, where again an endless mass of people streamed past the coffin. Then to the strains of funeral music,

at 4:00 p.m. sharp the coffin was slowly brought into the Mausoleum—then a temporary one which was replaced by the present one of granite and marble in 1930. At that moment all factories, trains, steamers, conveyances, machines and people stood still for five minutes in tribute while thousands of factory hooters sounded and guns fired a funeral salute.

The working people of the entire world also paid their last tribute. Factory workers in many countries stopped work for five minutes in homage. In Berlin hundreds marched through the snow-swept streets and voices broke as they conveyed the sad news that in Moscow Lenin was being buried that day. In trains in France conductors asked passengers to stand in tribute.

For the first time in the history of mankind the death of one man moved hundreds of millions of people throughout the world.

Everyone had heard the name of Lenin.

Lenin's Behests

Lenin knew the Soviet Union had a great future. He urged the Communist Party and the people to build socialism and communism. He knew that thanks to the determination and hard work of the Soviet people, thousands of factories would be built, that railways and roads would cross the entire country, that power stations would go up on great rivers to bring electricity to every home, that hundreds of thousands of tractors and other machines would work the vast fields of the collective farms which peasant small holders would form, that all Soviet citizens would receive

an education, that once backward Russia would become an advanced and powerful socialist state.

Lenin urged us constantly to strengthen the alliance of workers and peasants, the friendship between the peoples of our country, and friendship with the workers and oppressed people of the entire world. He dreamed of the day when the working folk in other countries would set about shaping a free and happy life and would take for their example the Soviet Union as the world's first socialist workers' and peasants' state. He called on us to strengthen the defences of our country and to always show concern for the Red Army. The defence of the Fatherland is the sacred duty of every Soviet citizen. He called upon us to cherish and strengthen the Communist Party.

At the grave of their dead leader the Soviet people vowed to march forward along the road Lenin had mapped out. In that year 240,000 of the most advanced workers joined the Communist Party, and thousands of young men and women became members of the Young Communist League—which is better known as the Komsomol organization. The Komsomol, and the Young Pioneer organization, were both named after Lenin. At the working people's request Petrograd, which played such a splendid part in the October Revolution, was renamed Leningrad.

38.

THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLANS

During the terrible years of the Civil War Russia's workers and peasants defended Soviet power. But,

the First World War, foreign intervention, and internal counter-revolution had ruined the country's economy. There was chaos, hunger and poverty. The foreign capitalists thought that the Soviet republic would not be able to deal with all these problems and that Soviet power would come to an end. They were wrong. The Communist Party called on the Soviet people to restore order. First it was necessary to restore the factories, mines and railways and put agriculture back on its feet. The Soviet people took up the challenge and after several years of very hard work they restored order.

However, simply rehabilitating the economy of old Russia was not enough. The Russian Empire had no factories capable of making motor vehicles, tractors, aircraft and complex machine-tools. For the Soviet Union to become an advanced industrial power it was necessary to build new mines and many metallurgical, chemical, tractor and engineering plants, to erect big power stations, to lay new roads, and to mechanize agriculture. Finally, it was necessary to produce tanks, aircraft and guns to make the Red Army strong and always able to repulse any enemy attack.

To build socialism the Communist Party and Soviet government drafted five-year plans of the country's economic development. The first five-year plan started in 1928. The Soviet people were to transform a once backward Russia into an advanced industrial power completely on their own. No help could be expected from anywhere. The Soviet Union was surrounded by hostile capitalist states.

Determination and Hard Work Do Wonders

To build new factories, railways and power stations plenty of steel, coal, oil and other things were needed. The Soviet Union is rich in minerals but these deposits had first to be found and so hundreds of geologists were sent all over the country. They discovered vast deposits of copper in Kazakhstan, coal and iron ore in Siberia, oil between the Volga and the Urals and sulphur, which had before been imported at great expense, in the Kara-Kum Desert in Central Asia.

Now the problem was to develop these deposits. The entire country was transformed into one huge construction site. Everyone threw himself into the job of carrying out the five-year plan. The newspapers reported what was going on at the various building sites as if they were reporting from a battlefield.

It was no easy matter to start building new factories. There were not enough experienced engineers and technicians and there were very few machines. Soviet industry had only just started producing its first trucks, cranes and excavators. As a result the giant enterprises of the first five-year plan were often started with pick and shovel.

The Soviet people had to deny themselves everything in order to buy foreign machinery at great cost and hire the services of foreign experts. People abroad believed it would take years and years before the Soviet Union would have an advanced industry. They did not know then what a free people building socialism could do.

The Dnieper Power Station

One of the most important building jobs in the first five-year plan period was the Dnieper Power Station. The Dnieper River runs for hundreds of miles southwards into the Black Sea. However, in one place huge boulders created rapids and only brave and experienced men would risk their lives to attempt to navigate the river at this spot. To raise the waters so that they covered these boulders and also could be used to set into motion the turbines of a power station a huge dam had to be built on the river below the rapids.

Building the Dnieper Power Station was a tremendous job. Experienced building workers, and young people from factories and farms came to help from all over the country. The hardest part was building the dam. The river bed had to be first drained of water. Cofferdams were built so that the water could be diverted along another route. The enclosed section of the river was then pumped dry. But the Dnieper was not easy to tame.

One frosty night in December the river unexpectedly broke through one of the coffer-dams. The icy waters rushed into the foundation pit. Despite the fact they were frozen and dead tired volunteers worked for three whole days and nights pumping out the water. There was another time when the waters washed out the earth beneath a steel wall and knocked it down. Divers had to saw the wall into pieces under the water, bring them up, weld them together and put the wall back.



At the construction site of the Dnieper hydropower station.

Nevertheless the station was built a whole year earlier than had been planned and began operating on November 7, 1932, the day of the 15th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. It provided electricity to coal pits in the Donbas and mines in Krivoi Rog and towns and villages in the Ukraine. This one station generated more electricity than all the power stations of the old tsarist Russia had produced. Water

covered the rapids. The whole river became navigable.

Magnitogorsk

Thousands of tons of metal were needed. In the Southern Urals there was a mountain known as Magnitnaya (the Magnetic Mountain), which was extremely rich in iron ore. However, this was a wild and desolate place. There were only a few villages and a

small iron works in miles and miles of forest. One day workers and engineers arrived to build a huge metallurgical plant and the city that is now called Magnitogorsk.

It was not easy to begin building. Machinery was scarce and a great deal had to be done by hand. But the builders worked day and night even during the worst of winter snowstorms. Dynamite was used to break up the frozen earth. The noise of the explosions was carried far in the fros-

ty air. Lumps of frozen earth shot up like pieces of bullets and clouds of dust filled the sky. This job was done very quickly. Then the first blast furnace was built. Finally, in 1932, the first batch of metal was produced.

Komsomolsk-on-Amur

The Soviet Far East is a vast and beautiful region. It is rich in minerals, furs, valuable woods and medicinal

Builders of Komsomolsk-on-Amur, the city of the young.

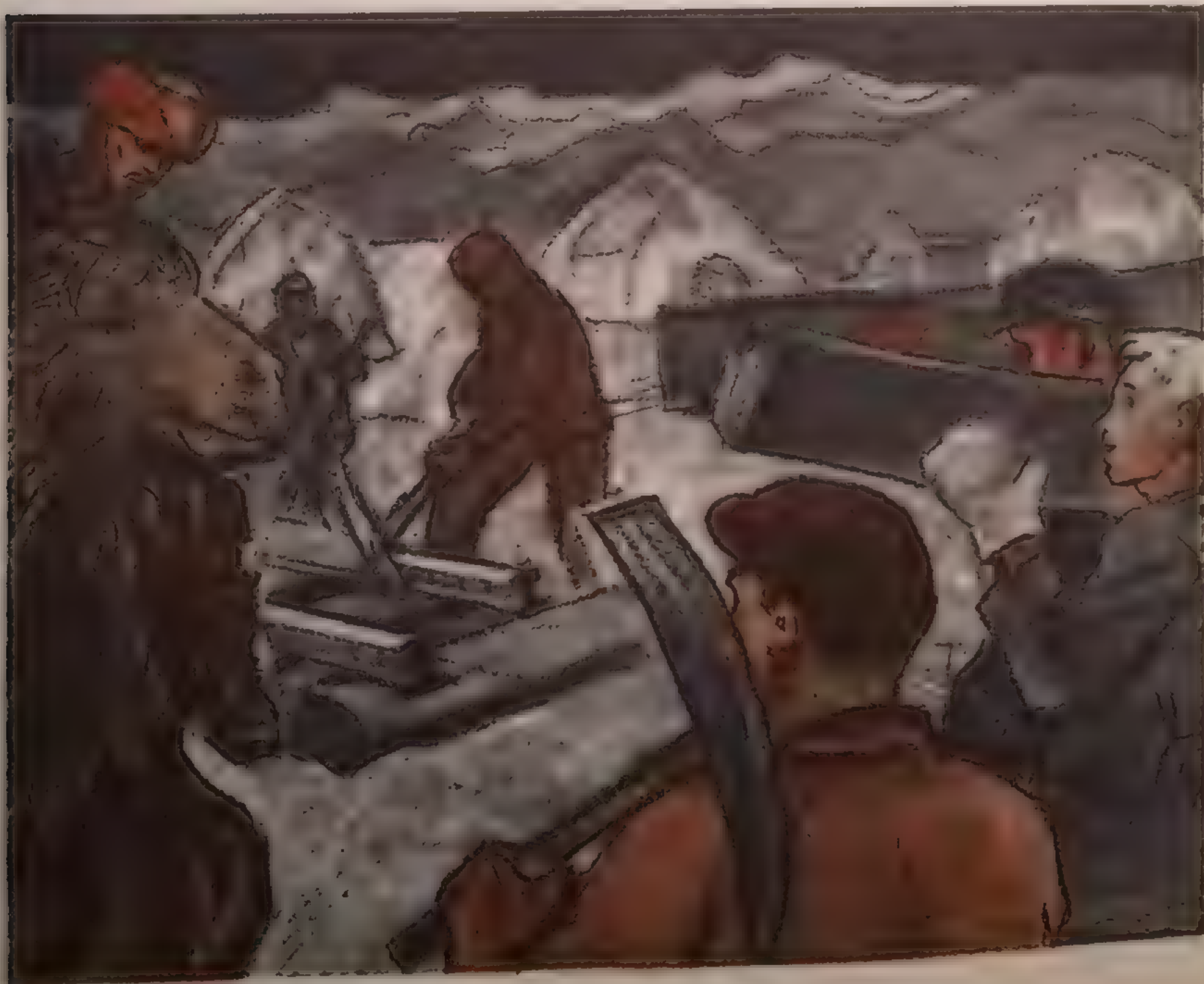


herbs. Here in the taiga a town was to be built. The site chosen could be reached only from the Amur River as all around lay impenetrable marshes. Komsomol volunteers drained the marshes and chopped down age-old trees to clear the site. Time and again the Amur's rising waters almost flooded the foundation pits of future factories. Once this was caused by a whole lot of rafts of logs piling up. Without a moment's hesitation a

young Komsomol dived into the icy water. He separated the rafts and saved the day.

The town grew. The builders worked hard to clear ground from the taiga for factories, houses, streets and squares. Today this city, Komsomolsk-on-Amur, is one of the biggest in the Soviet Far East. New housing districts extend out to the hills. Factories ship their products all over the country. The city is still growing.

The Turkestan-Siberian railway was one of the key projects of the first five-year plan of economic development.



The Turksib Railway

Another important job in the first five-year plan period was building the famous Turksib, one of the longest railways in the Soviet Union. It stretches for nearly 1,500 km across desert, the steppes and mountain ranges from southern Siberia to Central Asia. Turksib stands for Turkestan Siberian Railway. Work started on the railway at both ends at the same time.

It was particularly hard to lay the track through the desert. Everything, not only the rails, sleepers and gravel but also food and drinking water—which incidentally was strictly rationed—had to be brought by camel. Working together on this job were people of different nationalities, former nomad stock breeders from distant steppes and farmers. Russians, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Kazakhs worked side by side and became good friends.

There were few machines to begin with and nearly all the work had to be done by hand. But after a little time trucks and excavators arrived and work began to go ahead faster. Then came the great day when the builders, who had begun the railway at either end, 1,500 kilometres apart, finally met. The railway was completed 17 months ahead of schedule. Now Siberia could ship grain and manufactured goods to Central Asia and Central Asia could send its cotton to Siberia.

Socialist Moscow

The Soviet capital of Moscow changed beyond all recognition during the years of the first five-year

plans. The new Proletarsky (Proletarian) district was built on the southern outskirts where before the Revolution the ugly houses of the workers had stood. The pride of this district is the Likhachev autoworks, known by its Russian abbreviation of ZIL. The motor vehicles it produces are well known abroad as well as in our country. This huge modern motor works was built on the site of a tiny factory that was more a repair shop than anything else. By the end of the first five-year plan it was making 50-odd motor vehicles a day. Now it produces one motor vehicle every other minute.

There are many machines that simply won't work without ball bearings. Without them cars, tractors, and planes cannot go. The Soviet state had to pay foreign capitalists huge sums of money for ball bearings it had to buy abroad. No wonder everybody waited eagerly for the Moscow ball bearing plant to be finished. It began operating in 1932, at the end of the first five-year plan period.

Moscow became a city of broad streets and squares with many new housing districts. Naturally, the population grew quickly and buses and trolley-buses were no longer able to deal with all the passengers. It was decided to build a Metro, an underground railway. The first line opened in 1935. Soon one line after another was built linking the various districts. Each station was large and beautifully decorated with marble walls and brightly lit halls.

Thanks to all the work done during the first five-year plans Moscow has become a big port as well. A canal was opened in 1937 that links the

Moskva River with the Volga. A broad river now flows where there were villages and fields before. On its bank stands the handsome building of the river terminal with a beautiful park.

39.

COLLECTIVIZATION

Soviet power gave the peasants land. But they continued to work on their own. They cultivated the land as before with the wooden plough, sickle and scythe. There were still a great number of rich peasants, called kulaks, for whom the poor peasants worked. They owned large herds of cattle and big fields of wheat.

The small peasant farms could not provide the country with enough grain, meat, sugar, butter, cotton, leather and other farm produce. Only large-scale farming could provide the population with enough food, and industry, with sufficient raw materials.

The first big state farms (sovkhozes) were set up on former landed estates right after the October Revolution. The first collective farms (kolkhozes) were formed at about the same time. In the first few years of Soviet power there were few such farms. It was necessary to make agriculture collective on a large scale. It was possible to do so during the first five-year plan periods because socialist industry was now able to provide the countryside with tractors, harvesting combines, trucks and other machinery.

Peasants joined kolkhozes on a purely voluntary basis. They would decide to set up a kolkhoz during a general meeting, which took place in the biggest building of the village, usually the school.

Imagine the following scene: a table covered with red cloth stands on a platform at one end of a classroom. On the table is a kerosene lamp. A stranger wearing a city suit with his trousers tucked into his boots is speaking to the villagers. "Comrade peasants," he says, "I am a worker from a factory. Our party has sent me here to help you start a kolkhoz." Everybody in the room starts to talk. "What is a kolkhoz?" the villagers ask. "I shall try to explain," the worker says. "How many people have you in your village who can work?" "About a hundred and fifty," somebody shouts. "And how much land do you sow and what sort of harvest do you get?" the factory worker then asks. "It all depends," comes the reply. "Our kulaks plant a lot. They have good horses and ploughs and can hire labourers. No wonder they get a good harvest. But we poor peasants have a hard time. We've got enough land but many of us don't even have a horse. So when autumn comes round there's not much of a crop at all." "Have you got any machines?" the worker asks. Amidst laughter somebody shouts: "Fancy a poor peasant having machines! You must be crazy!" "Well," says the worker, "if you start a kolkhoz, you'll have machines. In the kolkhoz you will all work together. You say there are a hundred and fifty of you who can work. Pool everything you have, your land, your horses and your ploughs. We workers in the towns will



The first Soviet-made tractor.

help you and send you tractors and other machines. The strips of land you have now are so small that there's no point in using a tractor on them. But when you join them all together in a kolkhoz, tractors can work this land."

"But what about the kulaks? Will they be in the kolkhoz too?" somebody asks. "On no account," the worker says. "The kulak is an enemy of the kolkhoz."

Again the room becomes noisy. Somebody cries: "We don't want a kolkhoz." "Shut up!" other voices cry.

Then the worker says: "You will always be poor if you go on like this. Our leader Lenin has said so. Without kolkhozes the country will never have enough grain and other produce and the villagers will be always poor. That is why our Party has sent factory workers to the country to explain to the peasants why it is necessary to organize kolkhozes. Some 25,000 of us, Communist Party members, have been sent to the country!" "And who will run this kolkhoz? And how are we to reckon things?" come more questions. "You will run eve-

rything yourselves," the worker explains. "At a general meeting you will elect a chairman and a board that will manage the kolkhoz. And you will earn according to how much you work."

The meeting continues till late at night. The peasants leave wondering how they are going to live and work now in this new way.

Many times they gathered to discuss the problem until the majority decided to start a kolkhoz. True, it was not smooth sailing from the very beginning. Some of the peasants were doubtful. However, gradually they came to realize that only by working together on land which they owned would they be able to do away with their backwardness and poverty.

The kulaks fought against the kolkhozes. They knew that if the kolkhozes became a success this would mean the end of their farms. At first they tried to persuade the peasants not to join kolkhozes, but when this did not work they tried to do as much harm as possible, killing kolkhoz cattle, burning kolkhoz grain and murdering the most active kolkhoz members and Communists. But despite this the peasants organized kolkhozes with the help of the workers of the cities and towns and under the leadership of the Communist Party. Towards the end of the first five-year plan period most of the peasants had joined kolkhozes.

The kolkhoz changed the whole way of life in the country. Now the peasants worked together. It was much easier to work the big kolkhoz fields as the kolkhozes had many tractors, harvesting combines, threshers and other machines. Electricity

was now installed in homes of collective farmers and on farms.

Before the October Revolution there had been few village schools in the country. Only one out of every five peasants could read or write. There were almost no educated peasants. The kolkhozes did away with illiteracy. The life of the collective farmers became much richer and fuller.

40.

SOCIALISM IS BUILT

The Results of the First Five-Year Plans

The Soviet people finished their first five-year plan ahead of time. Then came the second five-year plan, and the third, which the war interrupted. During these years thousands of miles of railways and motor roads were laid, new towns were built, and collective farms were set up in the countryside. Before the war with Nazi Germany, Soviet industry produced in one month as much as old Russia did in a year. The country now made its own complex machine-tools, tractors, cars, warships, warplanes and artillery. The collective and state farms provided enough food for the country and raw material for industry. The USSR became an advanced industrial and agricultural power.

The Heroes of the First Five-Year Plans

The Soviet people achieved so much in such a short time because all the country's wealth belongs to the working people who create this wealth.

One of the biggest building jobs was the Stalingrad, now Volgograd,

Tractor Works which was completed in only eleven months. Here as everywhere it was Communist Party members and Komsomols who led the way. The first tractor made by this plant is now on exhibit at Moscow's Museum of the Revolution. It serves to remind people what a great step forward was made during the first five-year plans.

New complex machinery and instruments were installed in new factories and power stations. It was now necessary to learn how to use this new equipment. This was not easy. But Soviet workers managed. Alexei Stakhanov, a Donbas coal miner, hewed 102 tons of coal in one shift instead of the required seven. A few days later his comrades did even better. The Donbas miners were able to achieve such results because they had learned how to use the new machinery and had reorganized their work.

The Stakhanovite movement, as it was called, spread all over the country. Thousands of workers and collective farmers, among them engine-driver Maxim Krivonos, the Vinogradov sisters Maria and Yevdokia who were both weavers, the collective-farm girl Maria Demchenko and the girl tractor-driver Pasha Angelina, topped quotas over and over. This was because they worked for themselves, for their own state. Miracles were created by the free work of the Soviet people.

"Study, Study, and Study!"

Before the October Revolution only one out of every three in Russia could read and write. But to build socialism the Soviet people had to have knowledge and skill. The

first thing to be done was to do away with illiteracy. Millions went to school, young and old, men and women of every nationality in the country. And soon illiteracy became a thing of the past.

A law was passed introducing compulsory elementary education which meant that all children of school age had to have at least four years of schooling. Of course anyone who wanted could finish the seven- or ten-year school programme. Many schools were opened in towns and villages where children were taught in their native languages.

The USSR stood in need of college-trained engineers, technicians, doctors, teachers, agronomists and other specialists. The builders of the Dnieper Power Station, the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Mills and the Turksib railway opened their school books, when they got home from work.

One day a group of foreigners visited the construction site of the Dnieper Power Station. "How many of your people study?" one foreigner asked. "Ten thousand," the accompanying Soviet engineer replied. "And how many workers do you have in all?" the foreigner asked. "Ten thousand," came the answer. "Who works then?" the foreigner wondered. "Those who study," was the reply. It was like that everywhere, throughout the whole country.

During the first five-year plan periods socialism triumphed in both town and country. There were no exploiters in the country. There were no landowners, no capitalists, no kulaks, no shop-owners. All the Soviet people worked either at state

enterprises and offices which belonged to the entire people or on collective and state farms. Each person was paid according to his work. All power in the Soviet state belonged to the people, to the workers, collective farmers, and intelligentsia.

What the Soviet people has achieved is recorded in the Constitution of the USSR which was adopted on December 5, 1936. The Constitution contains the basic laws which govern the life of the Soviet people and the Soviet state.

THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

41. TREACHEROUS ATTACK

Capitalists in every country had long been preparing to attack the world's first socialist state. Nazi Germany was the Soviet people's greatest enemy.

In 1933, several years before the war broke out, German capitalists put Hitler's Nazi party in power. The Nazis jailed and killed thousands of German anti-fascist factory workers, writers and scientists. They treated Communists with special cruelty.

The German communist leader Ernst Thaelmann was kept a long time in prison before the Nazis brutally murdered him in 1944.

For many years, day after day, Nazi newspapers, books and radio kept insisting that the Germans were superior to all other peoples and should rule the entire world. The Nazis built up a powerful army, which on Hitler's orders set out to conquer and enslave other nations.

On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany attacked Poland. Gradually almost all the big countries were drawn into the fighting. The Second World War began. Nazi Germany captured many European countries. Then on the Sunday of June 22, 1941, it treacherously attacked the USSR, without even declaring war. The Nazis wanted to destroy the Soviet Union, kill off most of the Soviet people and turn the rest into their slaves.

The Nazis attacked suddenly. At the beginning of the war against the USSR they had more soldiers, tanks and aircraft. Also they had the factories of all the European countries they had conquered working for



On June 22, 1941 Hitler Germany treacherously attacked the Soviet Union.

them. The Nazis were sure that with such great strength they would smash the Soviet Union before autumn came.

The Soviet people did not want war. But since there had always been the danger of an attack, a powerful war industry had been built up over the years of the first five-year plans. The Red Army was equipped with new kinds of military planes, tanks and heavy guns. The USSR had a strong navy. Soviet engineers and scientists were increasingly developing new types of weapons. The celebrated Katyusha rocket mortars went into action at the front in the very first months of the war.

The Nazi surprise attack put the country in serious danger. But the Soviet people knew that one day they would win and they fought with every ounce of strength against the enemy.

At the Brest Fortress on the frontier many of the soldiers and their officers along with their wives and children were killed in the very first minutes of the war. However, the survivors fought on to the bitter end, though water and food as well as ammunition ran out. The heroic defenders were cut off from the entire country, the front having moved hundreds of miles east. Still they continued to fight on under their

Commissar Fomin, their commander Major Gavrilov and other Communists. One day, when heavily wounded, Fomin was captured by the Nazis and shot. Though more were killed and though their wives and children died from hunger and thirst these heroes would not surrender. "We shall die before we give up the fortress," they wrote with their blood on a sheet which they hung out over the fortress wall. To this day we can see on the walls the marks that they made: "We shall die but we will not leave" and "Comrades, revenge us!"

The heroic defence of the Brest Fortress continued for more than a

month, pinning down a large enemy force. The Nazis broke into the fortress only after its defenders had been killed. When the Nazis occupied the ruins Major Gavrilov hid in a big cellar where he spent several days without food or water. When his thirst got too much for him he would press his mouth against the cold brick wall. Finally he lost consciousness. His groans were heard by the enemy. But the moment the Nazis entered the cellar he came to and fought back for a whole hour until he had no hand grenades left and only one remaining bullet in his revolver. At that moment he was shot from behind and captured.

Defenders of the Brest Fortress.



He went through the entire hell of Nazi concentration camps. Pyotr Gavrillov was later awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for his gallantry. The Soviet people will always remember the heroic defenders of the Brest Fortress.

Under pressure from a better equipped enemy with a larger army, the Red Army fell back in fierce fighting. Along the entire length of this vast front, which was some three thousand kilometres long, Soviet soldiers fought heroically against the enemy. In no other country had the Nazis met such fierce resistance.

When Nikolai Gastello's plane was hit he guided his flaming craft into the midst of a column of enemy tanks, trucks and petrol tank cars that were moving east. With a tremendous explosion everything blew up. Many officers and men of the Red Army sacrificed their lives in the same way fighting for their country. Once again, as is always the case in times of difficulty and hardship, the Communists and Komsomols were in the front lines.

The heroism of the Red Army and the entire Soviet people wrecked the Nazis' plans. They had calculated on defeating the Red Army in a short time and ending the war. They failed completely.

42.

**"EVERYTHING FOR THE FRONT!
EVERYTHING FOR VICTORY!"**

Communist Party Organizes Resistance

Responding to the Communist Party's call the entire people rose to fight their Great Patriotic War against the Nazis. The entire work of defence was directed by the Central Commit-

tee of the Communist Party. A State Committee for Defence was formed with Stalin at its head.

Millions fought against the Nazis. More than half of all Communists and Komsomol members volunteered for the front. In the face of death the soldiers took them for their example. "Count me a Communist," they said before going into battle.

Almost twelve thousand people, of whom some nine thousand were Communists and Komsomol members, were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for bravery in battle. At museums today one can see Communist Party and Komsomol cards riddled with bullets or stained with the blood of the heroes who gave up their lives for their country. Among the many fine generals that the Communist Party brought to the fore during the war were Bagramyan, Vasilevsky, Vatutin, Zhukov, Konev, Malinovsky, Rokossovsky, Chernyakhovsky, and Chuikov.

The Party sent out an appeal: "Everything for the front! Everything for victory!" The entire country was turned into a military camp. Many factories were moved east—to the Urals, Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Their workers declared that they would do not only their own quota but also that of their fellow workers in the forces. True, it was women who had to do most of the work. They took over from their husbands and sons who had gone off to fight. Often old people and teenagers also worked at factories, sometimes, round the clock. Hundreds of thousands of people performed heroic deeds. The young Siberian steel worker, Alexander Chalkov, invented a new way of melting steel. He alone produced so much steel



The war effort.

above his quota that it was enough to make dozens of heavy guns and tanks, thousands of mortars and other weapons.

At collective farms, it was again chiefly women, old people and teenagers who did the work, though most of the tractors and horses had been requisitioned for the army. But the front was supplied with arms and food without fail. Engine-drivers showed great courage, often driving trains through heavy bombing. Thus, one driver, whose name was Kushner, was bringing a munitions train up to the front lines. Suddenly Nazi

aircraft attacked and set two wagons on fire. Risking his life Kushner uncoupled the burning cars and drove them away. The rest of the munition arrived safely.

Scientists and engineers worked hard to devise still better weapons. Doctors and other medical personnel did their best to save the lives of the wounded. In the Urals, Siberia, the Volga basin, Central Asia and Transcaucasia everyone, whatever his or her nationality, did everything they could to bring about victory. Many donated savings for tanks and aircraft or sent parcels of warm

things to the men at the front. They knew that every little thing helped to defeat the enemy.

This Must Not Be Forgotten

The Nazis that attacked the Soviet Union were strong and very cruel. Their leaders demanded that they kill Soviet people without pity. "Kill every Russian, every Soviet person no matter whether you are faced with an old man, a woman, a little girl or a boy," one Nazi order said. The Nazis killed and tortured millions of the Soviet people—the defenseless, sick, and weak, old people, women and children.

One little girl wrote: "In Petya's home the Germans were cooking dinner. Peter took a bit of meat and a potato. The Germans burned Peter for that alive." Zina was walking along the street when she saw several Germans opening a box of sweets. The little five-year-old girl did not know what the Nazis were like. She took one of the sweets and the Germans killed her. A soldier at the front received this letter from his boy: "Daddy, Mother is dead. Daddy, the Nazis grabbed the little ones, tossed them into the air and stabbed them with their bayonets."

That is what the Nazis did with children. Everywhere they went they left death and wanted to strike fear into every Soviet heart and make Soviet people their humble slaves. The lives of the Soviet people and of the Soviet state were at stake.

43.

THE BATTLE OF MOSCOW

The enemy wanted to capture the Soviet capital at all costs. Suffering tremendous losses the Nazis reached

the outskirts of Moscow by late autumn 1941. In those days the city presented a grim, unusual sight... Curtains were tightly drawn to keep the black-out. Shop-windows were protected by bags of sand. There were hardly any people in the streets and at night only the footsteps of army patrols were heard. On the outskirts Muscovites worked day and night, digging deep ditches and putting up defence installations. "The enemy will not pass!" they said.

Meanwhile Hitler announced to the entire world that on November 7, 1941, he would review a parade of his troops on Moscow's Red Square. There was a parade on November 7 in Red Square but only of Red Army troops who marched through the square on their way to the front.

The entire country rallied to Moscow's defence. The city's defenders performed many heroic feats. One night German aircraft flew towards the city to bomb it. Victor Talalikhin, a Komsomol, went up to intercept them. In a fight with another plane he was wounded in the hand and his ammunition ran out. When the Nazi bomber still flew on towards Moscow, he rammed it. It blew up in mid-air. Realizing that his own plane would no longer respond to the controls, he bailed out. Victor Talalikhin, Hero of the Soviet Union, was the first to ram an enemy aircraft at night. Later, after many more brave actions, he was killed defending Moscow.

A group of 28 men of a division that had come from Kazakhstan and was commanded by General Panfilov were holding a key sector near the Volokolamsk Highway on the western outskirts of Moscow. Besides Russians there were also Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Kirghizes and



The Battle of Moscow.

Turkmen. On the morning of November 16, 1941, to clear the way for the big Nazi force advancing on Moscow along the Volokolamsk highway, Nazi aircraft bombed this sector. After that they swept it with heavy artillery and mortar fire. Believing that the Red Army force had been wiped out, Nazi soldiers advanced. However, Red Army troops had been waiting for them and inflicted heavy losses. The Nazis turned and fled. Then the Nazis sent tanks against the Soviet positions.

Suddenly the soldiers heard the familiar voice of their officer, Vasili Klochkov, a Communist Party member. Under heavy enemy fire he had

managed to reach them. In four hours of heavy fighting Klochkov and his men put 14 Nazi tanks out of action. The Nazis failed to break through. But there were few Red Army survivors. Towards nightfall the Nazis sent more tanks against them. "There are thirty tanks, my friends," Klochkov told his handful of men. "Russia is large but we cannot retreat, behind us is Moscow!" In another four hours of heavy fighting in which nearly all the men were killed tank after tank went up in flames. The enemy did not get through.

While the battle of Moscow was going on, thousands of Soviet people fought behind the front lines. Among

them were the heroic Komsomol members Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Liza Chaikina and Alexander Chekalin who gave up their lives for their country.

Thanks to the bravery of the army at the front and the partisans and to the heroic labour of the entire country the Nazis were stopped on the outskirts of Moscow. In early December, 1941, General Zhukov's troops attacked the Nazis and beat them back. Many towns and villages were freed. The Nazis lost dozens of thousands of men and large numbers of tanks and guns. This was the first major defeat Hitler had suffered since the Second World War began, and the first major victory for the Red Army in this war. The victory at Moscow inspired millions of people with new courage and the struggle against the fascists gained new force.

The Soviet people will never forget the feats of the men who defended the Hero City of Moscow. On the 25th anniversary of this battle an eternal flame was lit at the foot of the Kremlin's ancient walls at the grave of the unknown soldier who was killed on the outskirts of Moscow in 1941. Carved on the gravestone is this inscription: "Your name is unknown but your deed is immortal. To those who fell for their country. 1941-45."

44.

HERO CITIES

The Hero Cities are those cities that resisted the enemy's desperate attacks, cities where many Nazi armies were defeated. The Hero Cities are, besides Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Sebastopol, Leningrad, Stalingrad, Novorossiisk, Kerch, Minsk and the Hero Fortress of Brest.

Sebastopol

The Nazis overran the Crimea by October 1941 and advanced on the key naval fortress of Sebastopol which they thought they would be able to take at once. However, besides the soldiers and sailors, the entire population—the factory workers with their wives and children—in short, everyone who could bear arms, rose to the city's defence. The Nazis wanted to capture Sebastopol because it threatened them from the rear. They sent against it some three hundred thousand men and large numbers of tanks, aircraft and guns.

The Red Army and Black Sea Navy defended Sebastopol, against the fierce Nazi attacks, for 250 days. The city was not evacuated until July 1, 1942.

Defiant Leningrad

The Nazis broke through to Leningrad in September 1941. They attempted to take the city by storm but met with unusually stubborn resistance. Then they formed a deep ring around the city. The terrible siege began.

Air-raid sirens sounded over and over again. Bombs and shells exploded in the streets. Houses went up in flames. Leningraders worked hard to save the many palaces, monuments and other handsome buildings in the city from destruction. They boarded up windows and piled sandbags against buildings.

For 900 days the Nazis bombed and shelled Leningrad. The city was cut off from the rest of the country. Bread and fuel were scarce; there was no water, no electricity, and no

transport. And though thousands died of hunger Leningrad did not give in. The defence operations were directed by the Communist Party and the Red Army Command. The soldiers defending the city fought with great heroism pinning down large numbers of Nazi troops. And despite the hunger, the cold and the siege, the city's many factories continued to work. People worked for 15 to 16 hours at a stretch. Heavy tanks went straight from the Kirov Plant to the front lines.

The women and girls in Leningrad showed great courage during the siege: they built fortifications, worked at factories and looked after the wounded at hospitals. Though hungry and tired they fetched water, firewood and food for those who could no longer move, saving thousands from death. The 17-year-old Kom-somol, Vera Shchekina, spent the little time she had after work searching the unheated, dark flats for children who had not been evacuated. In this way she saved 39 little boys and girls.

The only link that Leningrad had with the rest of the country was the "Road of Life," as it was called, that lay across the ice of Lake Ladoga. Though the Nazis bombed and shelled this life-line every day, hundreds of trucks brought food and munitions into the besieged city and took back the sick and the starving, firstly the children. The drivers showed great grit and pluck. Six times a Nazi plane bombed and strafed Maxim Tverdokhlebs truck. Though seriously wounded he continued on his way. When he finally reached the city, his truck was found to have 49 holes in it.

The entire country came to the help of Leningrad. The heroic Leningraders stood firm. At last, in January, 1944, the Soviet troops switched to the offensive and raised the siege.

45. THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD

Stalingrad, which was renamed Volgograd in 1961, is a famous hero city.

In the summer of 1942 the Nazis launched an offensive against the Lower Volga and the Caucasus. They wanted to capture south with all its grain and oil. They believed this would bring about the speedy defeat of the Red Army. Moscow would fall and the war would end in victory that year. The best Nazi divisions were sent against Stalingrad.

The Soviet troops vowed to fight to the last breath and turned every street and house into a fortress. For three months on end bombs and mines exploded and guns fired without stopping. The glow of fires and clouds of black smoke hung in the sky. There were days when Soviet troops repulsed as many as 25 enemy attacks. Finally, the Nazis broke through to the Volga and bombed and shelled the ferry station. Enemy aircraft set fire to oil tanks. Though sheets of burning oil covered the water, the ferries continued to operate, bringing in munitions, food and fresh troops day after day.

It was not only the troops that performed heroic feats but also the hospital orderlies, doctors and cooks who managed to provide hot meals under fierce enemy fire.



The defence of Sebastopol.



There was the case of Matvei Putilov who was ordered to repair a telephone wire. As he was working on it he was seriously wounded by a shell splinter. Before losing consciousness he managed to grip the ends of the wire between his teeth thus enabling the telephone to work again. When they found his dead body, he was still holding the ends of the telephone wire between his teeth.

Even when the front line moved right beside a factory the workers stuck to their posts. The tanks which were repaired at the Stalingrad Tractor Works rolled out of the factory gates straight into battle.

The visitor to Volgograd will surely be shown the celebrated "Pavlov House." While the battle was on, the enemy captured a building that had been partly destroyed by gunfire. Sergeant Yakov Pavlov was sent with three men to scout for information. At the entrance to this house they ran into a group of Nazis whom they drove out. The four Soviet soldiers took up positions in the house, which gave them a clear view of the entire square. Pavlov asked for and got reinforcements. The Nazis tried to take the house again but they could not. Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians and Kazakhs all fought side by side. A machine-gunner received 25 wounds, one of which crushed his left arm. He had only hand grenades left. With his teeth he pulled the ring and tossed the gre-



The Leningrad siege.

nades at the attacking enemy with his sound arm.

The entire world tensely followed this great battle. Stalingrad's defenders kept their word. Meanwhile the country got ready to start an offensive. Under the command of Generals Rokossovsky, Vatutin and Yeremenko Soviet armies were to attack simultaneously north and south of Stalingrad, encircle the huge Nazi army in a pincer movement and smash it. Fresh troops, tanks, aircraft and artillery were secretly moved up to Stalingrad. At daybreak on November 19, 1942, the attack began. In four days the Nazi army of 330,000 men was surrounded. Though Hitler sent large numbers of reinforcements to help them, and surrounded army itself tried desperately to break through, there was nothing they could do.

After bitter fighting, on February 2, 1943, the remnants of the surrounded Nazi army waved the white flag. The great battle on the Volga was over. It had broken Nazis' strength and from then on the Red Army began driving the enemy from Soviet soil. The tide had definitely turned in the Second World War.

46.

BEHIND THE FRONT LINES

The Partisans

In the midst of a thick forest far from railway lines and roads is a whole townlet of dug-outs, tents, even makeshift wooden huts. Gathered around bonfires are men, women, old people and teenagers. They are armed with guns, bombs and revolvers. Some are



Stalingrad.

in uniform, others in civilian clothes. They are partisans. Many Soviet people took refuge in forests, when the enemy invaded their country—not to hide, but to resist. More than a million people fought the enemy behind the front lines. The Nazis were not left in peace a minute on Soviet soil. Trains were derailed, munition dumps blown up and many Nazi soldiers killed by partisans, who were everywhere, in the forests of Byelorussia and around Smolensk, in the steppes of the Ukraine and in the Crimean mountains. In occupied cities and towns many Soviet citizens worked underground with the partisans. They made life very difficult for the Nazis. The partisans were led by the Communist Party.

One day a young girl Antonina Petrova, a partisan and Komsomol member, was captured by the Nazis who locked her in a dark, brick cellar.

She learned that the Nazis had found out where the partisans were camped and planned to attack them the next day. Her only thought was how to warn her comrades. The next morning two Nazi soldiers took her to the nearest town. On the way she suddenly jumped into a gully and escaped. The two Nazis fired many times at her but luckily failed to hit her. She reached the partisan camp in time. The partisans at once packed up and moved to another place. Later in the day the Nazis surrounded the camp and after firing at it they found it was empty. Antonina, who was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, was later killed in action.

The partisans were in constant contact with the Soviet-held territory which supplied them with reinforcements, arms and medicine and where they sent wounded and sick people and also children. The Nazis lived in

great fear of the partisans. Whole regions near Leningrad, in the forests of Byelorussia and outside Bryansk, were controlled by the partisans and the Nazis were afraid of going near them.

Resistance in Nazi Slave Camps

The Nazis shipped millions of people from the countries they had captured into Germany. A lot of them were held in the most terrible death camps. The Soviet prisoners in these camps never stopped resisting. They inspired other prisoners with their courage.

A captured Soviet pilot worked under guard at a Nazi military airfield. One day he and his nine comrades killed their guard. Then they managed to get into a Nazi aircraft by smashing the glass window of the cockpit. The Nazis were amazed when the plane suddenly took off. They tried to catch it but it was too late. These heroes not only escaped themselves but even brought back an enemy aircraft with them. The pilot's name was Devyatayev.

The Soviet General, Dmitri Karbyshch, was captured when he was seriously wounded. The enemies knew

The guerrillas.



he was a leading scientist and wanted him to work for them. But he told them: "I am a Communist and I hate you. I know that we will win! You can expect only death and the curses of the whole world!" He was terribly tortured by the Nazis, but nothing could break his spirit. In the camp this 65-year-old sick man took a hand in organizing an underground movement and in preparing for an uprising. By this time the Red Army was already near the German border. The Nazis killed thousands of prisoners. Karbyshhev was made to stand out in the snow naked, in the depth of winter and a fire hose was turned on him. He shouted to the prisoners as he died: "Lift your heads, comrades, victory is near!"

47.

YOUNG HEROES

There has never been a war like the Great Patriotic War. Not only because it was the most destructive of all wars and millions died. But mainly because there have never been so many heroes and so many brave actions as in this war against the Nazi invaders.

Leonid Golikov

Leonid Golikov joined the partisans at the age of 13 when the Nazis occupied his native village near Novgorod. He was a clever and brave boy. One day he blew up a car in which there were two Nazis. One was killed straight away, the other, a tall man in a white tunic with gold shoulder straps of a general,

jumped out with the attache case and ran off. Leonid followed him for almost a mile, before he finally shot him. The papers the dead general had been carrying proved to be so important that they were sent at once by air to Moscow. For this and other brave deeds Leonid was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. He was killed in action but will never be forgotten.

Valentin Kotik

When the war broke out the Young Pioneer Valentin Kotik, a Ukrainian, had just turned 11 and had begun the 6th form at school. He joined the partisans and became a scout. One day he and his friends were asked to find out when a Nazi officer, who was famous for having murdered and tortured many Russians, would be driving along a certain road. Together with his best friend he lay in wait for the car and blew it up, killing the officer and his bodyguard. The next day the Nazis announced that a large partisan force had attacked the car. In fact it had been the work of two small boys.

The Young Pioneer Valentin accomplished many exploits before he was killed fighting to free his home town of Shepetovka. In the town square stands the statue of a boy wearing a fur hat and carrying a tommy-gun. It is a monument to Valentin Kotik, a Young Pioneer and Hero of the Soviet Union.

Zina Portnova

Zina Portnova was a Young Pioneer from Leningrad. She was spending summer holidays, after having finished

During the war young Soviet people showed their great courage, fortitude and love for their country.

Komsomol
heroes:



Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya



Oleg Koshevoi



Alexander Matrosov



Yuri Smirnov

Young pioneers
who died like heroes
for their country.



Lyonya Golikov



Zina Portnova



Marat Kazei



Valya Kotik

7th form at school, with her grandmother in Byelorussia, when the war began. After the Nazis captured Byelorussia, Zina became a partisan, and also joined the Komsomol organization. One day, when out on an assignment, she was captured. The officer questioning her brandished a pistol at her and then put it down on his desk. She grabbed it and shot the officer dead. With a second shot she killed another officer. Then she smashed the window with her boot and killed the sentry outside. She pressed the trigger for the fourth time but the pistol failed her and she was captured again. She was horribly tortured by the Nazis but she died as she had lived—a real heroine.

48.

STRUGGLE FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLES

Army of Liberation

By 1944 the last Nazi had been driven from Soviet soil. The Red Army crossed the border and began to free the Nazi-occupied countries of Romania, Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Finland, Norway, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria. Meanwhile, Anglo-American troops landed in France and began to advance towards Germany's Western border.

The Nazi Command sent its best forces against the advancing Soviet armies. The fight over Warsaw was particularly fierce. The Nazis had built strong fortifications, which they bragged were impregnable, on the approaches to the Polish capital. However, in a matter of a few days Soviet troops broke through the enemy's de-

fences and freed Warsaw. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with them were the men of the fraternal Polish Liberation Army. Warsaw presented a terrible sight. While they hurriedly withdrew the Nazis had blown up and burned down everything they could. Most of this city, one of Europe's loveliest, had been turned into ruins. The Nazis had killed or sent to concentration camps hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants. Those who survived the fire and destruction came out with flowers to welcome their liberators.

From the craggy cliffs of Norway to the warm shores of the Mediterranean Soviet soldiers fought to free millions of men and women of various nationalities from Nazi bondage. In an old park in Berlin, where many heroic Soviet soldiers, killed in action, are buried is a tall mound. On it stands a monumental bronze statue of a Soviet soldier. In his right hand he holds a drawn sword, in his left, a little girl who confidently snuggles up to him with her curly head on her rescuer's strong chest.

49.

A GREAT VICTORY

The Nazis had wanted to capture the entire world and turn whole nations into slaves. But as people say: "Sow wind and reap a whirlwind." The anti-fascist movement led by the Soviet Union was such a whirlwind.

In early 1945, Soviet troops entered Nazi Germany from the East while the combined US, British and French troops crossed into it from the West. The Americans, the British and the French hardly encountered any resis-



The Great Patriotic War

The Soviet Army liberated Eastern Europe from the Nazi occupation.



tance at all, as the Nazis had sent all their forces against the Red Army.

The Soviet High Command told its troops that the time had come to finish the enemy. The soldiers vowed to raise the Flag of Victory over Berlin. The city was strongly fortified. The entrances to the underground were closed with thick plates of steel and it was used as a means of communication. Hitler ordered his soldiers to fight to the last man.

Soviet troops encircled Berlin and then began to storm the city. It took seven days of fierce street-to-street fighting before they finally got through to the Reichstag in the centre of the city. A great fire was burning, the thick heavy smoke rolled in clouds along the ground. Shells and bombs exploded. Finally the massive gray building of the Reichstag could be seen through the smoke and two men Yegorov and Kantaria, one a Russian, the other a Georgian, rushed towards it, carrying a red flag. Their comrades covered them with their guns and mortars. Firing their guns and tossing hand grenades the two men made their way up to the dome. At last they climbed out onto the roof and up to the top of the dome and raised the scarlet flag. On May 2, 1945, Berlin fell.

The days of Nazi Germany were numbered. A few days after Berlin was taken, the Nazis surrendered. The Great Patriotic War was over. On

◀ The storming of the Reichstag.

May 9, 1945, the Soviet people joyfully celebrated Victory Day. This Day has now become a yearly holiday.

The Soviet people won their Great Patriotic War against their powerful enemy, Nazi Germany, and its allies because they were fighting a just war to liberate their own country. All the peoples of the multinational Soviet state joined the fight to defend the gains of the Great October Revolution. It was the Communist Party, the Party the great Lenin had founded, which organized the Soviet people in this war and led them to victory.

The Soviet Union's victory in this Great Patriotic War saved mankind from Nazi slavery.

Japan Is Defeated. Second World War Ends

Though the Great Patriotic War had ended with the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Second World War still went on. Japan, Nazi Germany's main ally, continued to fight the USSR's wartime allies—China, the USA and Britain. Japan had seized vast territories, including most of China, Korea, Vietnam and other countries in the Far East and for many years had threatened to attack the USSR. A highly-trained Japanese army of more than a million men stood in full fighting readiness near the Soviet border.

To help its allies and bring the end of the war nearer, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. It launched an offensive simultaneously by land and sea in August, 1945. The Soviet Army and troops of the fraternal Mongolian People's Republic dealt the Japanese army in China and Korea a crushing blow. This was not easy, as Soviet



The Great Patriotic War

troops had to break through powerful defences and cross waterless steppes, marshes and steep mountains. Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945.

However, earlier, in August, the US government had ordered its air force to drop atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This act is a crime which the US capitalists committed against mankind. The world will never forget it.

The surrender of Japan ended the

Second World War which had lasted six years. The Red Army's victory in the Far East enabled the peoples of Asia to win the freedom and independence they were fighting for. The Soviet victory and the liberation war of the peoples of China, Korea and Vietnam resulted in the formation of the socialist states—the People's Republic of China, the Korean People's Democratic Republic and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

◀
The great victory. The Soviet soldiers throw Nazi banners to the foot of the Kremlin wall.

BUILDING COMMUNISM

50.

FROM SOCIALISM TO COMMUNISM

The victory the Soviet people won in the Great Patriotic War cost them very dear. Twenty million Soviet people were killed. The Nazis destroyed and burned 1,710 cities and towns and 70,000 villages. To live well again, the people had to work as hard and perseveringly as they had fought against the enemy. It was necessary not only to rebuild everything destroyed during the war but also to develop the economy still further. This important task was successfully accomplished.

The Soviet people began to restore their economy while the war was still on. The state gave the liberated areas great help by way of machinery, seed and building materials, all of which was sent from the Eastern part of the country where there had been no fighting. After heroic efforts the ruined cities of Smolensk, Kharkov, Minsk, Voronezh, Sebastopol, Stalingrad, Kiev and Odessa were all rebuilt. New factories and big power stations were built and gas pipelines laid to Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Lvov and many other places. In 1954, the USSR put into operation the world's first atomic power station.

The Citizen of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union is a socialist state. The Soviet people have built socialism in accordance with Lenin's instructions under the leadership of the Communist Party. The Soviet Union has become a powerful and advanced world power. It has achieved this because the people who run the country are the working people who make the machines, build the houses and grow the grain. The factories, the

railways, the land and all its riches belong to the people. In this socialist country there is nobody who can do nothing and live off the labour of others. Under socialism every person works at a job he is fitted for and is paid accordingly. This means that the more and the better a person works, the more he gets. All are equal, men and women and people of all nationalities. Soviet citizens elect their representatives to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies who possess all the power in the country.

The rights and duties of the Soviet citizen are recorded in the Constitution of the USSR, the country's fundamental law. The main right is the right to work. In the USSR anyone can get a job he has been trained for and likes. There are no unemployed in the country. The Soviet citizen also has the right to leisure. There is a five-day working week with two days off. The working people have paid annual holidays. They can spend them at sanatoriums where they can have medical treatment or at holiday homes. Soviet people have the right to education. Every school graduate can continue his studies. Of course, the kind of school or college he enters and the trade or profession he learns depend upon his abilities and training. The Soviet state takes good care of elderly and disabled people. They receive monthly pensions. When a person falls ill he is given free treatment at a polyclinic or hospital and receives sick pay.

The rights the Soviet citizens enjoy are closely linked to their responsibilities. These responsibilities are first of all to work well, protect socialist property and defend the country.

The Communist Future

The Soviet people are building communism.

Under communism work will be the most important and necessary thing in a person's life. Everyone will be well educated and conscious citizen of society. Thanks to the effort of all, there will be such a large variety of food and other things that everyone will have everything he needs to live, work and relax. A person will work according to his ability and receive according to his needs.

Under communism machines will do all the work that is still done by hand. Machines already bake bread, melt steel and iron and cultivate fields. There are many automatic machines, even entire automatic factories and there will soon be even more. People will work better, know more and be able to do more. They will have more time for recreation, science and sport. Work will become more and more interesting. Life and work in the country will be almost the same as in towns.

51.

ELECTRICITY WORKS MIRACLES

In 1920, Lenin had a talk at the Kremlin with the famous British writer H. G. Wells. The room was lit with candles as the power station was not working. Lenin told the British writer about the plan for the electrification of Soviet Russia. He said that electricity would change life completely; there would be huge factories, fields would be worked by machines and houses would have plenty of electricity. This writer of

stories of fantasy did not believe Lenin. He could not imagine that this would happen in such a poor country as Russia. But Lenin knew what strength a freed people had and believed in the Soviet people.

The Soviet people have carried out Lenin's plan for the electrification of their country. Today the USSR holds first place in Europe and second place in the world in the output of electricity.

The more electricity is produced, the faster industry and farming develop and the better life becomes. Hundreds of power stations have already been built in the country. Among them are huge hydroelectric complexes and atomic stations. The time will soon come when electric power will do all jobs still done by hand at factories, mines, building sites and farms and when it will be still more widely used in Soviet homes.

New Power Stations

The Volga, mother of Russian rivers, has changed beyond all recognition. Not so long ago there was nothing but bare steppeland around Volgograd. Then one of the world's biggest power stations, along with the new town of Volzhsky, was built. An enormous dam was built across the Volga River and an artificial sea, some 600 km long, was made in the steppes. The giant excavators used to dig the foundation pits, scooped out so much earth in one go, that it filled half a 25-ton tip-up lorry. Today the waters of the Volga splash down from a great height to turn the blades of powerful turbines. Through transmission lines stretching for thousand of miles electricity is supplied to construction sites, factories, farms and to Moscow. Power stations

have been built on the Volga near the cities of Rybinsk, Gorky, Kuibyshev and Saratov.

Huge power stations are also going up on rivers in Siberia which was once a terrible place where many Russians who fought for freedom and happiness were sent to do hard labour. Today Siberia, a land of fabulous wealth, is a place where vast building projects are being carried out, where towns and factories are springing up.

The broad glittering Angara races through the taiga, foaming at bends and in shallow spots. In one place cliffs come so close together that the river had to force its way through. It was decided to build a dam at this spot, and make Angara's colossal energies serve man. Many volunteers, among them a large number of Komsomol members, came to tackle the taiga and tame the turbulent Angara. On the site of a small settlement, in a place where bears roamed freely they have built the new socialist city of Bratsk and one of the world's biggest power stations. There are people of all ages, trades and nationalities living in Bratsk but they all share in common a love of their country, courage and confidence in the future.

52.

A MODERN KOLKHOZ

The USSR has a population today of more than 255 million. To feed everyone, plenty of bread, meat, butter, and vegetables is needed. Agriculture provides the flax, cotton, leather, wool, sugar-beet and milk for the mills and the factories that make cloth, footwear, canned food, sugar and butter.

The USSR has many modern collective and state farms. One is the Bolshevik collective farm in the wooded marshlands of Meshchera where once the few scattered tiny villages could only be reached during the dry summer months or in the winter when the marshlands had frozen. Farms here were small and the harvest poor. No wonder, as every scrap of farmland had to be wrested from the forest. Such was this place when the first collective farms were started there. One was the Bolshevik farm, formed by six poor peasant families in 1928. Then they had only two cows, an old grey nag, a wooden plough and a cart.

Today the Bolshevik farm includes several villages with more than a thousand inhabitants. Its land stretches for dozens of miles. The farm breeds pedigree cows, sheep and poultry. This livestock has to be properly fed with potatoes, sugar-beet, fodder legumes and maize. Good harvests require lots of fertilizers. Meshchera is rich in peat. It is first used as bedding for cattle and then transported on a small narrow-gauge railway to the fields where it is mixed with chemical fertilizers.

The farm owns a variety of machines. The work is mostly mechanized. There are automatic feeding troughs, watermains and electric ventilation. Cows are milked and manure cleared away also with the aid of electricity. Farmers have learned a variety of new jobs. They drive tractors, lorries, harvesting combines or excavators. Sometimes they are electricians or fitters. Quite often they do several jobs.

The old villages have been transformed into small towns with lovely gardens and broad streets. The new

houses are very different from the old log cabins. Each family has its own three- or five-room house with running water and central heating. Most houses have radios, TV sets and refrigerators. The farmers have also built for themselves a club with a cinema hall and a large library.

Many secondary school-leavers from this farm go off to study at universities and colleges. They come back to work on the farm as agronomists, live-stock experts, doctors, teachers and engineers. Pensions are granted to veteran farmers. There are gaily-painted kindergartens and day-care centres with glass verandahs for under-sevens who have everything they need from toys to a piano.

Schoolchildren Help Grown-ups

Schoolchildren help farmers by organizing their own teams. Each team is given land, seed and machinery. The children work in their free time under the eye of supervisors. The work they do is usually discussed in reports at meetings in the various republics and at nationwide gatherings. In 1970, the year of Lenin's centenary, one of the first prizes went to the schoolchildren of the village of Karabikha where the great Russian poet Nikolai Nekrasov had lived for many years. The schoolchildren had spent a lot of time and work trying to grow a new variety of potato and also had planted trees along all the streets of the village.

In sunny Moldavia boys and girls cultivate fine vineyards and orchards, in the Urals they have planted cedars and in the very cold climate of Yakutia, they have been able to grow the first orchard. In the Kalmyk Republic a team of schoolchildren has taken care of about 6,000 lambs.

Boys and girls do much to protect nature, as to guard and love nature is to guard and love one's country.

53. GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS

Exploring Space

For thousands of years man dreamed of flying to the stars as he looked at the night sky. As the ages passed man gained more and more control over the forces of nature. But, the dream of flying into space remained a dream.

The Soviet people were the first to fly into outer space. On October 4, 1957, the world's first artificial satellite, the Sputnik, was sent up. Then a second and a third one and still another went up and a space rocket landed on the Moon. Soviet people left the first message from Earth on the Moon. It was a pennant engraved with the hammer and sickle and the inscription "CCCP," the Russian for USSR. A Soviet automatic station was first to land on the Moon and televise pictures from it to Earth.

Soviet scientists and engineers made long and careful preparations before sending a man into space. It was necessary to launch a rocket with great speed so that it would rise hundreds of kilometres from the ground. Intricate instruments had to control and observe the flight of the spaceship from the ground. The cabin of the spaceship had to be designed so that the cosmonaut could live and work in it. Scientists, engineers,

designers and experts of all kinds worked together on this project.

Then on April 12, 1961, the Soviet spaceship Vostok, piloted by Yuri Gagarin went up.

Imagine a large launching site, on which the huge pointed rocket stands. As the signal is given for the launching a dazzling flame explodes with a roar from underneath the rocket. The rocket seems to burst out of a pillar of fire as it shoots up. A few seconds later a new bright star shines in the sky.

Here is how Yuri Gagarin describes what he felt during his flight:

"I left my seat and hung in the air between the ceiling and floor of the cabin... I suddenly found I could do things much more easily than before. And it seemed as though my hands and legs and my whole body did not belong to me. They did not weigh anything. You neither sit nor lie, but just keep floating in the cabin. All the loose objects likewise float in the air and you watch them as in a dream... Drops of a liquid that dripped out of a tube took on a spherical shape and floated about freely in space until they came into contact with the porthole glass and clung to it like dew on a flower."

The spaceship rose to a height of more than 300 km, went around the earth in 90 minutes and returned safely to the appointed place. The whole world was astounded by the exploit of the Soviet citizen and Communist, Yuri Gagarin. This flight was man's breakthrough into outer space. After it many space rockets went up manned by Soviet cosmonauts, among them the world's first woman cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova.

April 12 has been made the Inter-



Soviet people pioneered the way to the outer space.

national Day of Aviation and Cosmonautics. Every year a salute is fired in Moscow in honour of the conquerors of space.

Each space flight is one more step towards conquering the mysteries of the Universe. The day will come when space travel will become quite

ordinary. There will be large earth satellites and flying stations.

The Soviet Union wants the exploration of space to be based on broad international co-operation. In 1975, the rendezvous and docking in space of Soviet and American spacecraft took place.

Knowledge Is Power

Before the Great October Socialist Revolution Russia was among the most backward capitalist countries. Two out of three of the population could neither read nor write. Today if you walk into any factory and ask a young operative how many years of schooling he has, many will say eight, nine or ten years. Today you will scarcely find a worker with only five or six years of schooling. If so he will say it is becoming harder for him every year to do his job and that he must start studying again. In fact many factory workers study in the evening or by correspondence courses at specialized secondary schools and colleges. Modern machinery requires a great deal of skill and knowledge.

The USSR has more engineers, technicians, doctors, teachers and other specialists than in all of capitalist Western Europe. Young people from many countries come to the USSR to acquire a higher education. They go back home as well-trained specialists.

Lenin used to say: "You can become a Communist only when you enrich your mind with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind." The Soviet people are following Lenin's advice. They are educated, knowledgeable, cultured people who must build a communist society and live in it.

54. HELPING ONE ANOTHER

"Man is Friend, Comrade and Brother to Man."

Soviet people help each other unselfishly in every way. Many live as

the Communist Party teaches them, according to the principle: "Man is friend, comrade and brother to man."

In one town a local radio station broadcast an urgent appeal asking for a person who had suffered from burns to donate his blood. It was needed to save a 13-year-old boy who had been brought to the local hospital with serious burns. Half an hour later some 25 people had come to the hospital. Among them was a 13-year boy who said that as he was of the same age his blood would be best. A young woman urged the doctors to take her blood as she also had a boy of about the same age. The boy's life was saved.

Soviet schoolchildren also try to live and study the communist way. They take part in Subbotniks, help the elderly and the sick at home and give a helping hand to their classmates who have fallen behind.

55. THE USSR FIGHTS FOR PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP

There was not a single country in the world before the Great October Socialist Revolution where power could have belonged to the working people. The Soviet Union was the first such state. For nearly 30 years it was the only socialist country and was surrounded by capitalist states who were its enemies.

The Red Army defeated Nazi Germany in the Great Patriotic War and helped many countries to free themselves from fascist slavery. After the defeat of Germany and Japan in the Second World War people's revolutions took place in several countries

in Europe and Asia. These countries, where the workers and peasants took power into their own hands, took the road of socialism.

The Friendship of Socialist Nations

The friendship of the socialist countries grows stronger every year. These countries share the same aims and problems. They want to finish building socialism and create a communist society. In order to do this as successfully and quickly as possible the socialist countries must work closely together and help one another. For example, the USSR has large deposits of oil. Since it extracts so much, it can share it with friends who do not have any. But since it is not profitable to transport oil by train or tanker, as they have to come back empty, it was decided to lay a pipeline 4,500 km long from the Volga oilfields to Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic. This pipeline, the world's longest, is known as the Druzhba (Friendship) pipeline and was built by the joint effort of the fraternal socialist countries.

The Soviet Union supplies the fraternal socialist countries with many splendid machines and plant. Joint construction projects and exchanges of complex machinery and scientific discoveries have become a common practice between these countries. Thus, the Bulgarians and Romanians worked together to build a bridge across the Danube. In Bulgaria several large factories were built with the help of Czechoslovakia and the GDR. Engineers and workers from these two countries and Poland also helped to build a big paper mill in Romania. Excavators from Czechoslo-

vakia are currently used to dig canals in the USSR. Many Soviet books are printed in the GDR. Soviet colleges have trained thousands of specialists for the socialist countries.

The friendship between the socialist countries and the way they help and support each other show a new type of relations between states that never existed before.

USSR Helps Developing Countries

Many years ago the rich and strong capitalist powers seized vast territories in Asia and America, which they turned into their colonies. Though the peoples living in these countries fought bravely for their freedom and independence, they could not defend themselves against the fire-arms of the colonialists with spears, bows and arrows. For many years hundreds of millions of people lived in colonial bondage.

The European and American capitalists grabbed the immense wealth of these countries: diamonds, gold, coal, oil and iron and copper ores. Though in these warm countries the earth gave rich harvests the year round, people died of hunger, which along with disease and poverty took tens of millions of lives. In some African countries half the children under two died of malaria. There were hardly any schools or hospitals to speak of. The colonialists despised the enslaved peoples, looking upon the dark-skinned and the yellow-skinned as inferior human beings. But the colonial peoples continued to struggle for liberation, especially after the Great October Revolution in Russia.

Many of these colonies gained their independence after the end of the Second World War, when fascism was defeated and a strong camp of socialist countries was formed. Among them were India, Egypt, Syria, Algeria and the Congo. The struggle for liberation spread to all of Africa, where dozens of independent states were created.

However, the winning of independence is only the beginning. The newly-freed countries have to build up their own industry, agriculture and culture, and open schools and hospitals. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries came to the aid of the former colonies, helping India, Pakistan and Syria among others to build factories, power stations, textile mills, colleges and hospitals. Thousands of young people from these countries come to the USSR to study at Soviet schools and colleges. They want to become good specialists so as to take part in building a new life back home.

The world's biggest desert, the Sahara, lies beside the fertile valley of the Nile, Africa's greatest river. Since the Nile only irrigates a very narrow strip of land, the Egyptian government decided to build a huge dam at Aswan. Soviet engineers and scientists helped both to design and build this dam. Despite the fact that they were not used to the dry, hot climate, Soviet engineers and workers did a good job. They helped Egyptians learn new trades. For example, they became trained mechanics and operators of bulldozers and excavators. The Aswan power station has been built. Today it generates plenty of cheap electricity. Meanwhile the Nile has widened to

50 km, and has brought new life to a large, once barren area. Soviet specialists have gone home, but the thousands of young Egyptians they taught to operate modern machines continue to work on ancient Egypt's liberated soil.

In many of the newly-freed countries Soviet specialists are remembered with affection. In one small African country a Soviet doctor cured 15,000 sick people. He never refused to help anyone no matter what time of day or night it was. His door was always open to all.

Guarding Peace

A cluster of white paper birds fluttered in the air. The doctor had told little Sadaka that if she made a thousand of these paper birds she would get well again. The fatally ill Japanese girl believed these paper birds would help her live and be happy. She was only a baby when the American airmen dropped the atomic bomb on her home town of Hiroshima in 1945. Thousands were killed but even those who survived will never be strong and healthy again. How many have died since then, from the horrible disease of radiation sickness! Sadaka was only 13 years old and she wanted so much to live, go to school and play with her friends. She never made those thousand paper birds. The 643rd dropped out of her hands, and like

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The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries support the freedom and national independence of the colonial and dependent nations.



so many other survivors of the atomic bombing, she passed away.

After her death the schoolchildren of Hiroshima and other Japanese cities began to make paper birds which they sold to collect money to build a monument at Sadaka's grave. They want this monument to remind everyone on earth of Hiroshima's victims. May it urge them to fight for peace! May people never know the horror of atomic war!

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries are safeguarding peace. Their fight for peace has aroused hundreds of millions the world over. People want an end to war, oppression, misery and suffering. This is what progressive people in all countries, first of all Communists, are working for.

The peoples of the world are watching with keen interest the consistent efforts of the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to carry out the Peace Programme which the CPSU adopted at its 24th Congress. The Programme is based on Lenin's principles of the peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems.

The Peace Programme expresses the hopes and sentiments of the millions all over the world.

56. THE CPSU IS LEADING THE PEOPLE TO COMMUNISM

At its 22nd Congress in 1961 the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted its programme for the building of communism in the USSR which the Soviet people are now successfully carrying out.

On April 22, 1970, the entire country celebrated the birth centenary of Vladimir Lenin, founder of the Communist Party and Soviet state and leader and teacher of the working people of the world. The working class, Communists and working people throughout the world marked this day with loving respect for Lenin's memory. In this centenary year the Soviet people completed ahead of time their eighth five-year plan (1966-70). Large factories and power stations were built and the output of coal, oil and power was greatly increased. During this period Soviet scientists made many splendid discoveries. More than a fifth of the population moved into new flats.

The CPSU met for its 24th Congress in the spring of 1971. This Congress, a major event in the history of the Party and the entire Soviet people, defined the key task of the ninth five-year plan. This was to bring about a great improvement in the material and cultural standards between 1971 and 1975. This was done with success.

The leader and organizer of the Soviet people is the Communist Party which has nearly 15 million members. They are the country's most advanced and best people. It has a true helper in the Komsomol, which has 34 million members.

In December, 1972, the Soviet people celebrated a great day in their

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The Soviet Union is a champion of peace and friendship among all peoples of the planet.



history, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the USSR. This was a day of friendship for not only our multinational socialist state, but for all of progressive mankind.

"The fact that the USSR was the first to build a socialist society and was the first to demonstrate in practice the real meaning of equal fraternal relations between peoples, will undoubtedly be remembered and valued by all peoples for all times to come," said Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

In February 1976, the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union met to review, among other things, the results of the successful ninth five-year plan, and define targets for the country's economic development in the tenth five-year period (1976-1980).

The main objective, as before, is to promote the wellbeing and raise the cultural standards of the Soviet peo-

ple. It is planned to build and put into operation large factories and power stations. Agriculture will increase its output of food products for the population and raw material for industry. There will be a better and more varied supply of goods. Millions of Soviet people will move into well-appointed flats. Many new schools will go up, including well-equipped boarding schools for rural children. Many more extramural institutions for schoolchildren, such as Young Pioneer Palaces and Clubs, will be opened.

By fulfilling the tenth five-year plan targets the country will make another big stride towards communism.

The land of victorious socialism is confidently marching ahead. It has set itself the great goal of building communism, a fair and just society, in which everyone will live in abundance and in happiness. It is for the sake of this bright future that people are working so hard from one end of our beautiful country to the other.



Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, makes a report.

The people of the many nationalities living in the Soviet Union are all equal citizens of their country.



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Soviet people are building communism. This great goal inspires dedicated work all over the country. These young people work at the Volzhsky motor works in the town of Togliatti on the Volga.



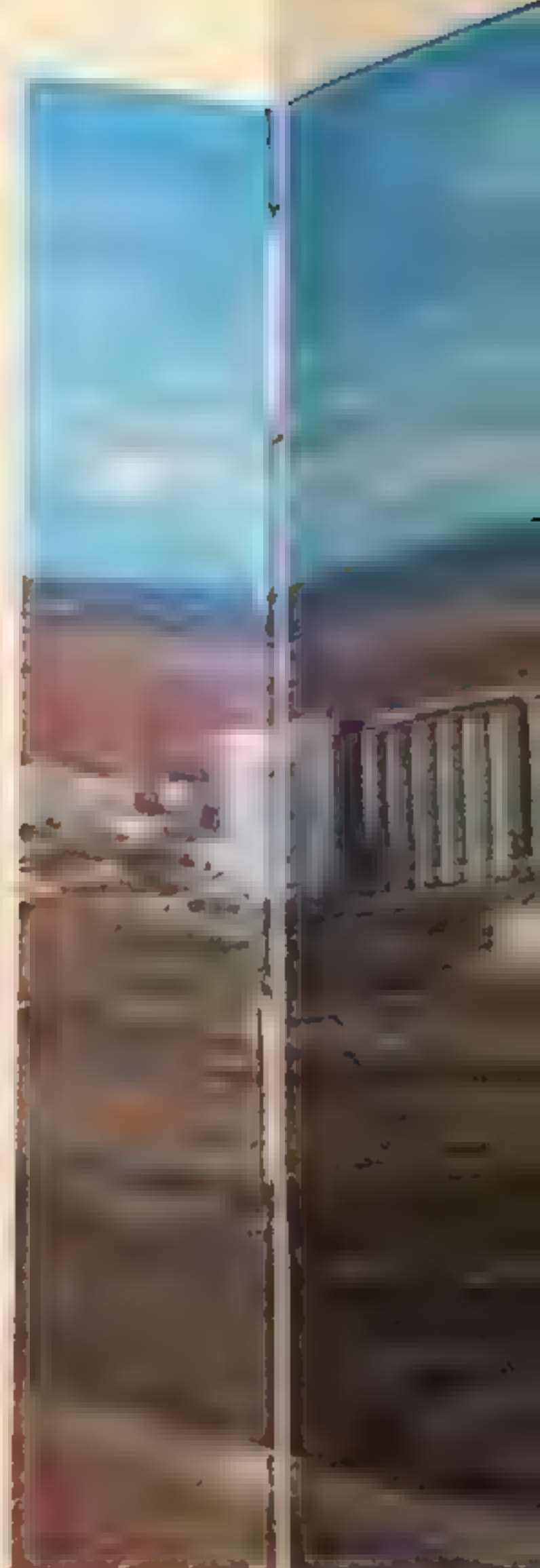


More electric power means the faster growth of the industry and agriculture. The Krasnoyarsk hydroelectric station on the river Yenisei is the world's biggest power station (6,000,000 kw).





Agriculture increases its yields with each year. Dedicated collective work has sharply raised the material and cultural standards of the people.





The Communist Party and the Soviet Government give much attention to the education and upbringing of the younger generation.



The Soviet Union has completed the transfer to universal secondary education.

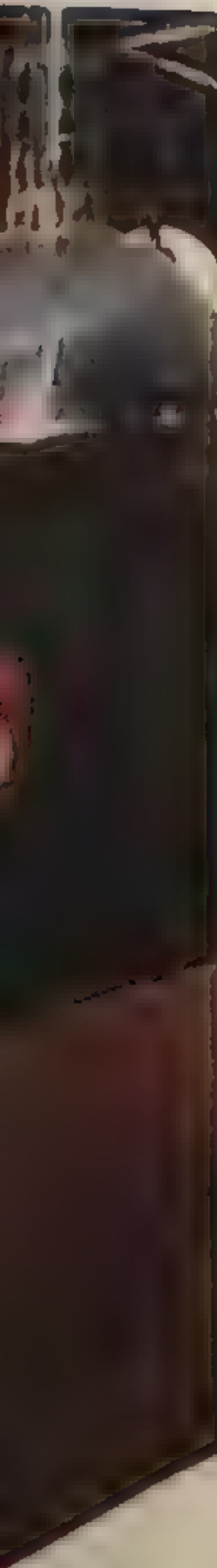
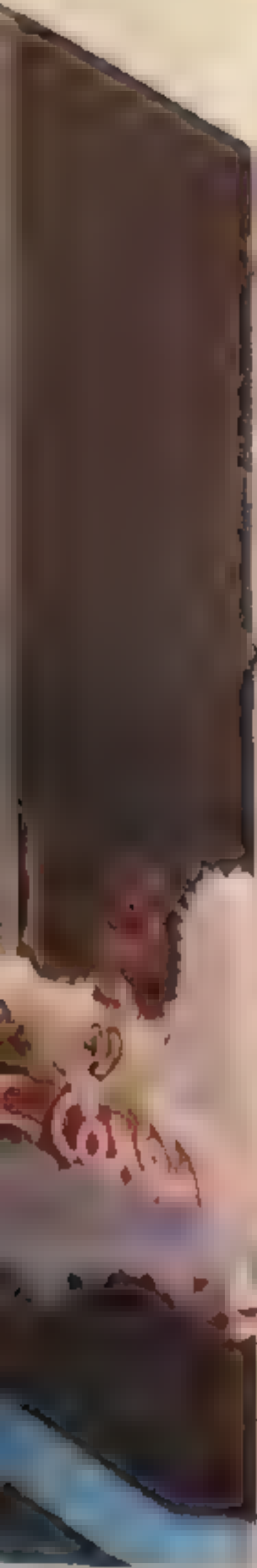


Soviet scientists have accomplished much in all fields of knowledge. Science strengthens its ties with production and increasingly promotes technical progress.





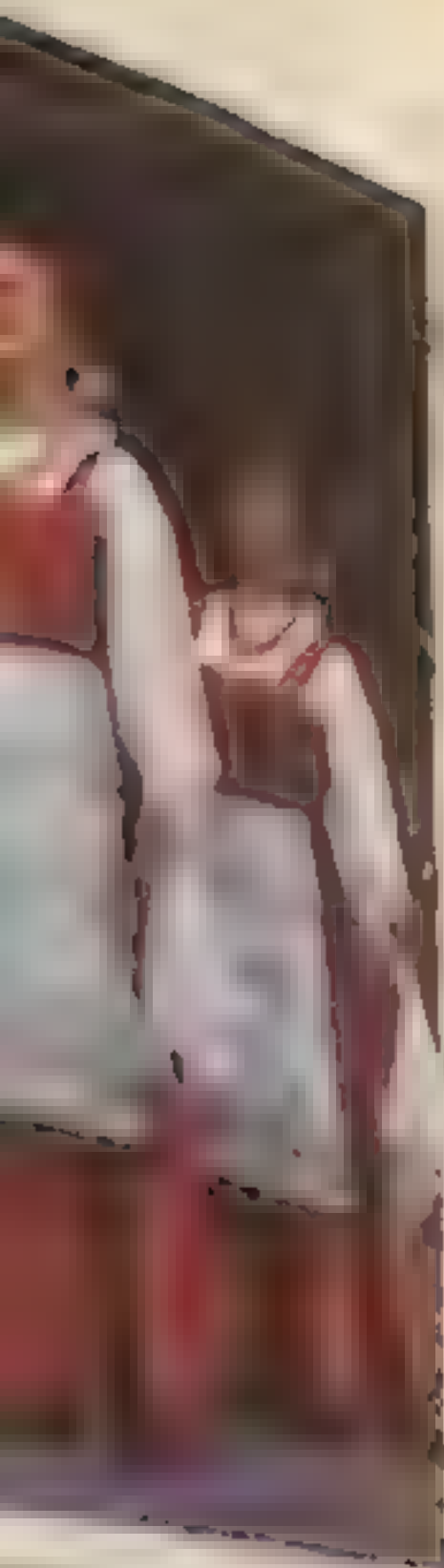
The living standards of Soviet people are steadily rising. Each year hundreds of new schools, hospitals and shops are opened, and millions of people receive new flats.



Maya Plisetskaya, the celebrated Soviet ballerina.

Amateur artistic activities and sports have become an important part of Soviet people's life.







Moscow. Each year on May 1 a festive demonstration is held on Red Square to celebrate the great international holiday, the day of solidarity of the workers of all lands.

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EARLY RUSSIA--the USSR